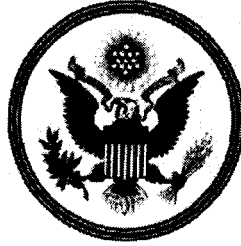


Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

March 1, 2006

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“Special Operations Aviation Enjoys Attention.”

“Defense Commissary Agency Leaders Meet to Map Agency’s Future.”

“Mobile Selects Tetra Tech, CH2M Hill for Environmental Services Contracts.”

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DAILY-affiliate Aviation Week & Space Technology reported.

Unattributed. 2006. "HUD Launches BRAC Initiative 'Operation Fresh Start' in Southeast." US Fed News (February 21).

Birmingham, Ala., Feb. 21 – The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Birmingham Field Office issued the following press release:

The results of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process have created opportunities and challenges for the communities where bases have been closed. In response, today, February 21, 2006, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) launched an initiative called "Operation Fresh Start" to assist those communities in the Southeast.

HUD Southeast Regional Director Bob Young stated, "HUD wants to develop relationships with those communities that need assistance and work with our partners to structure ways to revitalize and rebuild communities affected by BRAC closings". "This is just one of many ways HUD is outreaching to help communities affected by BRAC closings and devastation by disasters", said Young.

As a first step in the BRAC process, HUD has prepared a tool kit to make communities aware of some of HUD's resources available to them. This tool kit is available online[1] or you can call (404) 331-5001 ext. 2680 for a copy. The links at this website will enable BRAC communities to get more detailed information to assist them in the restructuring of their affected communities. Also available is the Department of Defense's website for complete information on the BRAC program[2].

Working through the local HUD offices in the Southeast, the HUD team is available to cities, local redevelopment authorities, and other interested parties (e.g., lenders, developers, nonprofits, etc.) to help them navigate through the agency's programs and processes. The HUD staff offers a variety of expertise in developing partnerships in both the public and private sectors. Visit the HUD Field Office Directors[3] webpage where you can find their phone numbers.

[1]
<http://www.hud.gov/local/shared/working/r4/ofs/?state=al>

[2] <http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/>

[3] <http://www.hud.gov/localoffices.cfm>.

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The session, held Feb. 6-10 in Williamsburg, Va., was attended by senior leaders and managers from all levels of the agency, who met to discuss and plan DeCA's roadmap for the future. They dealt with issues such as changes in military force structure and missions, base realignments

and closures, overseas basing, work force transitioning and A-76 competitive sourcing -issues that leaders feel DeCA must be ready for and adapt to in order to provide the commissary benefit more effectively and efficiently.

"This year we had a different approach. We identified goal captains to lead teams to research our goals before our conference met. We have three main goals and we evaluate where we are in relationship to those goals, determine what new strategies we need to put on our plate to support the commissary benefit in the future, and move forward," said Patrick B. Nixon, chief executive officer and acting director.

Bob Vitikacs, director of sales, and Keith Hagenbuch, director of performance and policy, are captains of one goal that deals with DeCA's core mission of delivering the commissary benefit as it relates to sales, facilities and equipment. Jerry Oestreich, director of human resources, and Pam Conklin, chief financial executive, are captains of the second goal dealing with the future of DeCA's work force. Vicki Archileti, director of corporate planning, and Gerald Adair, director of systems engineering, are captains of the third goal that deals with business infrastructure.

Goal captains continue their work after the conference. Each goal is linked to integrated groups of process owners. If DeCA is going to pursue Internet shopping, somebody owns that project and is responsible for getting it done as well as working with the various disciplines in DeCA to make it happen. If DeCA is doing a prototype work force, someone owns that and is the go-to person responsible for reporting progress and results, Nixon said.

Kevin Robinson, 804/734-8773,
kevin.robinson@deca.mil.

Unattributed. 2006. "**Mobile Selects Tetra Tech, CH2M Hill for Environmental Services Contracts.**" Corps Report 14/for (February 15): 32.

The Mobile District has awarded architect-engineering contracts for environmental support services to two firms. Tetra Tech Inc. of Fairfax, Va., and CH2M Hill Inc. of Atlanta will each provide services to the district covering environmental work associated with the Defense Department's Base Realignment and Closure Program. The range of activities will include water quality studies, contaminated site analysis, land use plans, mitigation plans, and master planning for facilities designated as BRAC sites. The contracts also cover regulatory compliance measures. Each contract is valued at \$1.2 million.

Contact: Mike Bettaker, project manager, Tetra Tech, (703) 385-6000; David Urbina, manager of business development, CH2M Hill, (770) 604-9095.

Unattributed. 2006. "**Sen. Roberts Meets DOD Official Discusses Effects of Base Realignment and Closures on Kansas Communities.**" US Fed News (February 24).

Topeka, Kan., Feb. 24 – The office of Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., issued the following press release:

Sen. Pat Roberts met with Patrick O'Brien, Director of the Office of Economic Adjustment under the Secretary of Defense, to discuss economic development in Kansas

communities in light of the recent Base Realignment and Closures (BRAC) recommendations.

"I was pleased to welcome Director O'Brien to Kansas," Senator Roberts said. "Our state was the first stop on his tour of BRAC communities. This action builds on the teamwork of already strong state and local leadership, especially in Parsons. I am encouraged to see the Department of Defense focus a great deal of attention on the needs of Kansas communities who play a role in the nation's defense."

In discussions with Director O'Brien, Senator Roberts learned that the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) will sponsor a search for a qualified candidate to serve as the Executive Director of the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant Local Redevelopment Planning Authority. This person will coordinate state, local and federal initiatives to redevelop the Parsons Army Ammunition Plant.

Senator Roberts said he will continue to work with OEA to assist Ft. Riley communities in preparing for the arrival of more than 3,400 soldiers and their families. Roberts asked Director O'Brien to help with the wide scale development predicted for the region as families start to settle in the surrounding towns as well as the development the Department of Defense is already doing on post.

Senator Roberts is a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Sarah Ross Little, 202/224-4774.

* * * * *

Unattributed. 2006. **"Elk 'Mugged' on Closing Naval Base."** US Fed News (February 24).

Concorde, Calif., Feb. 24 * The U.S. Navy issued the following press release:

The California Department of Fish and Game started "mugging" Tule Elk Feb. 13, in an effort to relocate them from Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment Concord.

The base is closing under the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, with portions of it being designated as wildlife preserve.

"'Mugging', the use of helicopter mounted net guns to aid in the capture of large game, is preferred to using tranquilizers, because it doesn't introduce foreign chemicals into the elk's bloodstream," said Tom Swauger, public affairs director of the California Department of Fish and Game.

The 46 elk that make up this herd have been living on the base for 30 years. They are being introduced to three herds in surrounding areas, with the majority being moved to Cache Creek, Calif., north of San Francisco.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, as well as students from the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of California at Davis, volunteered in the capture, examination, and relocation process. Some elk were tagged during examination for scientific research.

"The elk were a pleasurable sight," Richard Pieper, caretaker for Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment Concord, said. "It gave me a good feeling to see nature in its rightful place."

The Tule Elk, which are protected under the Tule Elk Preservation Act of 1976, have slowly been making a comeback in California. During the turn of the last century, there were less than a dozen. Currently, there are 3,800 elk in 22 herds across the state.

For more news from around the fleet, visit www.navy.mil.

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Henry C. Jackson. 2006. **“Vilsack Calls for More Input on National Guard Decisions.”** Associated Press Newswires February 28, 2006

Des Moines, Iowa (AP) -Gov. Tom Vilsack said Monday that the Bush administration had adopted a “trust me attitude” toward National Guard troop deployments, and he called on the president to give the nation’s governors a more active role in the discussion.

“Governors ought to be engaged and involved in making that decision,” he said by telephone from the National Governor’s Association’s winter meeting in Washington, D.C. “That certainly wasn’t done with the (base realignment and closure) process and it hasn’t been done with this process.”

Vilsack said the nation’s governors – Republicans and Democrats alike – were concerned about how the federal government would help states pay for increased troop levels and replacing equipment sent abroad. He spoke about those concerns after the governors met

Monday with President Bush and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Next year, 333,000 National Guard troops will be funded by the federal government – down from 350,000 that are funded this year. Vilsack said federal officials have pledged to find money in the budget should recruitment exceed the number of troops that were funded, but he expressed skepticism about where the funding would come from.

“We have no assurance, in fact, the money will be available,” Vilsack said, “and no assurance where it will be taken from in terms of our priorities.”

Other topics brought up by the governors during their meeting with President Bush included the war in Iraq and the war on terrorism, immigration, the National Security Agency’s domestic surveillance program and the Medicare prescription drug program.

Vilsack said the governors were concerned about the May 15 cutoff date for the Medicare program and suggested possibly extending the deadline.

“Considering that there’s been so much confusion, we might want to give people more time,” he said.

Jim Hodges. 2006. **“Should Fort Become a National Park?”** Daily Press (Newport News, VA) February 24, 2006

At a community forum Thursday night, some suggested the idea was an opportunity. Others prefer new development.

For those who have long thought of Fort Monroe as a city asset and now consider it

an economic opportunity for the city, there was a disagreeing opinion.

“We consider historic Fort Monroe a national treasure,” Louis Guy, president of the Norfolk Historical Society, told a town hall meeting Thursday in Phoebus.

For those who anticipate the loss of 7 percent of Hampton’s economy being remedied by taxes from new construction on waterfront property when Fort Monroe closes in 2011, there was the suggestion of a greater good.

It should be a national park with a historic bent, more than one person told the audience of about 200 and WHRO television cameras at the American Theater.

The Daily Press was a co-sponsor.

The park idea has become a recurring theme to Bob Harper, chairman of the Federal Area Development Authority, which is overseeing efforts to determine Fort Monroe’s destiny now that the Base Realignment and Closure commission has worked its will to close the facility.

“We’ve been receiving those ideas on the (city) Web site,” he said. “I’m not surprised.”

Several respondents on a panel of officials and experts in the process pointed out problems with the property reverting to a national park.

One is that the federal government has not indicated that it wants Fort Monroe after 2011.

“The National Park Service is underfunded by about \$600 million,” said Brian DeProfio, assistant to the Hampton city

manager. He is concentrating on BRAC and Fort Monroe.

“... They aren’t champing at the bit to take on Fort Monroe, but that doesn’t mean we won’t proceed in that direction (if that decision to do so is made).”

And Joe Bouchard, who worked with base reuse during the 1995 BRAC round while on the National Security Council, suggested another problem – and a remedy – with a park.

“Historic renovation and community development are not mutually exclusive,” he said. “You can be in a position to retain history ... instead of risking having to hope that Congress will appropriate money to support you year after year after year.”

Daniel Witter. 2006. “**Beale Leader Leaving.**” Appeal-Democrat (Marysville, CA) (February 25).

Brig. Gen. Larry Wells, commander of the 9th Reconnaissance Wing at Beale Air Force Base, will take a post at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, according to Beale officials.

Wells will be replaced by Brig. Gen. (select) Harry D. Polumbo Jr., currently assistant deputy director of Global Operations, J-39, with the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, D.C.

No date has been set for the change of command or when Wells will leave the base. He will become assistant director of Air and Space Operations at Air Combat Command at Langley.

"It's truly been my honor and personal privilege to have served with such sterling warriors and community leaders," said Wells, who has lived at Beale with his wife, Kathy, and three children since August 2004.

"Kathy and I are thrilled to be part of Team Beale and will miss the many friends we've made here." Wells said. "We look forward to our new assignment where we can spread the good news of all that Beale and the local community have to offer."

Wells said he enjoys leading the 9th Reconnaissance Wing and regrets leaving so soon.

"We hope we've made a difference while serving with you and will always have fond memories of all the many experiences we've shared."

In his new role, Wells expects to be deeply involved in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and still deal with Beale Air Force Base.

"The new job entails an increase in responsibility to organize, train and equip our warriors serving in the Air Force's largest command," he said. "We look forward to taking on new and interesting challenges."

During a short phone interview, Polumbo said he and his wife, Sandra, are looking forward to joining Beale.

"I'm really excited to be coming to Beale," he said.

Wells took command of Beale in August 2004, shortly before the first Global Hawk aircraft arrived.

The Global Hawk is capable of flying unmanned at altitudes above 65,000 feet for more than 24 hours.

Before leading Beale, Wells was the chief of F/A-22 System Management Organization and deputy director of Requirements for Air Combat Command headquarters.

Wells is an F-16 pilot with more than 2,400 hours of flight time in the aircraft. During his assignment at Beale, Wells was also trained to fly the U-2 and the T-38, both of which operate out of Beale.

Wells oversaw Beale during the recent Base Realignment and Closure process, which left Beale relatively unscathed, although 179 positions will be phased out and the 940th Air Refueling Wing will be folded into the Global Hawk program.

Polumbo takes over Beale as the Air Force proposes to phase out the U-2 by 2011. The proposal has yet to be approved by Congress and President Bush as part of the budget process.

Details on the phase out are not yet available, nor are potential impacts to Beale.

The proposed retirement of the U-2 would occur as the Global Hawk takes on a larger role. By 2012, Beale will have 51 Global Hawk aircraft.

Appeal-Democrat reporter Daniel Witter can be reached at 749-4712. You may e-mail him at dwitter@appeal-democrat.com.

The Associated Press. 2006. "**Walter Reed's Closing Means Another Move for Museum of the Macabre.**" Associated Press Newswires (February 25, 12:25).

Washington (AP) * The National Museum of Health and Medicine might get a new home.

The museum, which has collected thousands of medical oddities, has been located on the campus of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center since 1971.

But last summer, the Base Closure and Realignment Commission voted to close the military hospital and move many of its medical services to Bethesda by 2011.

The commission doesn't indicate what will happen to the museum, other than to say it won't be "disestablished." But it's expected to move with the hospital to Bethesda.

It would be the museum's tenth move since its founding in 1862.

Previous locations have included the National Mall, where the museum drew as many as 765-thousand people a year. Attendance has declined since then, but many are still curious about the exhibits, which include a giant hair ball that once filled the stomach of a 12-year-old girl.

On the Net:

National Museum of Health and Medicine:
<http://www.nmhm.washingtondc.museum>

Unattributed. 2006. "**MD HB 1576, 2006-2006.**" LegAlert (February 25).

Delegates Rudolph, Glassman, James, and Kohl; Establishing the BRAC Marketing and Infrastructure Improvement Program in the Department of Business and Economic Development; providing for the

administration of the Program; providing for financial assistance for infrastructure improvements in specified counties; establishing an advisory committee for the Program; requiring the Governor to include a specified appropriation for the Program; etc.

20060222 * (H) FIRST READING HOUSE RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

The Associated Press. 2006. "**Prosecutor Calls for 18-Year Jail Term for Uzbek Opposition Leader.**" Associated Press Newswires (February 24, 09:18).

Tashkent, Uzbekistan (AP) * An Uzbek prosecutor on Friday demanded an 18-year prison term for an opposition leader standing trial on charges of tax evasion and other economic crimes, his lawyer said.

Sandjar Umarov, the chairman of the Sunshine Uzbekistan group, pleaded innocent to all charges. His group was a vocal critic of last May's bloody suppression of an uprising in the eastern city of Andijan. Rights groups say troops fired on unarmed protesters and say the death toll was as high as 700; the government says 187 people died and that the uprising was provoked by Islamic extremists.

Prosecutor Gennady Davletov said Friday that Umarov's guilt had been proven and asked the City Court in the capital, Tashkent, to sentence him to 18 years in prison, his lawyer Valery Krasilovsky said.

Krasilovsky said that the accusations leveled at the trial were based solely on witness testimonies. "We never heard any analysis

or reference to any documents” from prosecutors, he said.

Sunshine Uzbekistan has urged the government of President Islam Karimov to start economic and social reforms.

Karimov, who has ruled the Central Asian nation since 1989, has conducted a crackdown on political foes and dissident Muslims, shutting down opposition parties and jailing thousands.

Facing Western criticism, Karimov’s government has refused an international inquiry into the Andijan events and evicted U.S. troops from a military base that was used for operations in Afghanistan.

Jack Dorsey. 2006. **“Retire JFK Now, Says Fleet Forces Commander.”** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (February 24): B1.

The Florida-based aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy should be retired “as rapidly as possible,” said Adm. John B. Nathman, the fleet commander here.

That could happen as early as March, with the following three to four months needed to physically place it in retirement, freeing the 2,200 sailors aboard for reassignment, he said.

“It is the right thing to do for the men and women on that ship,” Nathman said. “It is actually the right thing to do for the ship because the decision has been made.”

Virginia officials are interested in the 38-year-old Kennedy’s status because a Hampton Roads-based carrier * along with its economic benefits * possibly could be reassigned to Florida as a replacement.

Nathman, who completed his first year in the Norfolk-based Fleet Forces Command on Saturday, talked in his first in-depth interview about major issues facing the Atlantic and Pacific fleets he is responsible for training and equipping.

It’s been a fast-paced year with no let up in sight, he said. The Navy has put more boots on the ground in the Middle East to relieve Army and Marine Corps troops; worked to open an outlying airfield in Washington County, N.C.; tried to create an under-water sonar test range 60 miles off the North Carolina coast; and fought to protect Oceana Naval Air Station as a master jet base.

The actual retirement date for the Kennedy hinges on legislation that would repeal a recent law requiring the Navy to maintain at least 12 aircraft carriers, Nathman said. Retiring the Kennedy would drop the carrier force to 11.

After the release of the Defense Department’s Quadrennial Defense Review earlier this month, U.S. Sen. John Warner, R-Va., agreed to sponsor a bill that would take the Navy off the hook for that mandate.

“If we get the language removed, in pragmatic terms, it allows us to make the decommissioning decision sooner, allows us to make it in a very timely way for the Navy and the crew, and allows us not to make big investments in sustaining it,” Nathman said.

Trying to sustain the aging oil-fired carrier would be a losing proposition in Nathman’s view. There is no reason to expose the ship and crew to a deteriorating condition, he said.

Because the Kennedy never received the last portion of a \$350 million overhaul, which

was to have been done in Hampton Roads in the past year, it began to rapidly deteriorate, he said.

On Wednesday, inspectors were in Mayport, Fla., the Kennedy's home port, where they were expected to decertify half of its boilers, which produce steam for propulsion.

Last week the ship's arresting cable gear was decertified, meaning it can no longer land fixed-wing planes, only helicopters. Two of its four catapults also have been shut down.

"You would have to put almost \$200 million to get it back to operational status at sea, and you would still need another \$2 billion to get it back to where it needs to be," Nathman said.

That money is better used elsewhere in the fleet, he said.

The Kennedy, built in Newport News between 1964-68, most likely would be taken to Philadelphia to spend its final years in mothballs, said Pat Dolan, a spokeswoman for the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington.

It's the only deep-water facility the Navy has on the East Coast to keep such ships, she said.

As to what might replace the Kennedy in Mayport, Nathman said he doesn't know.

The Navy will spend \$10 million on an environmental impact statement to see whether it should dredge and renovate the Mayport piers to accept a nuclear-powered carrier.

"Do you want to home-base a nuke there?" he asked. "Do you want to put in

amphibious ships, put in surface warfare ships, or do nothing?

"The EIS needs to be done that will allow us to say what is the best case from either a strategic homeporting issue, or what are the best economic values."

Nathman, who previously served as vice chief of naval operation, said the long-term viability of Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach is tied to the need to build a second outlying landing field, referred to as an OLF.

The Navy is under court order to conduct additional environmental analysis on the impact of placing the proposed field in Washington County and has reopened considerations of four other sites for consideration.

The OLF is needed to relieve carrier landing practices at the Navy's auxiliary landing field at Fentress in Chesapeake, Nathman said.

Virginia Beach and Virginia officials are under pressure from the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission to roll back development around Oceana for it to continue as a master jet base.

"I believe in the long-term viability of Oceana, but you have to have the OLF," Nathman said. The field is opposed by local farmers and environmentalists.

If the OLF is not built, "I don't see how we can be good neighbors in the long term."

The Navy's F/A-18 Super Hornets are scheduled to be based at Oceana for 30 more years, he said. He's confident that with the continued efforts by the Virginia Beach and state governments, Oceana will remain.

“I was in the BRAC debates from the service standpoint,” he said. “I know the military value of Oceana. I know why the Navy never put it on the list to begin with. I understand why the BRAC Commission went after Oceana, because they saw the encroachment, the training issues and the safety issues.”

Reach Jack Dorsey at (757) 446-2284 or jack.dorsey@pilotonline.com.

The Associated Press. 2006. “**Air Force Secretary Visits Syracuse Air National Guard Unit.**” Associated Press Newswires (February 24, 15:34).

Syracuse, N.Y. (AP) * U.S. Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne spent three hours here Friday visiting the Hancock Air National Guard Base which has been chosen for one of the Air Force’s Predator aircraft squadrons.

The Predator, operated by a two-member crew on the ground, is used mostly for gathering intelligence and surveillance but can be armed with missiles fired by remote control.

Wynne was given a private base tour and a closed-door briefing on the \$63 million in improvements undertaken at Hancock since 1996, said U.S. Rep. James Walsh, the area’s congressman and chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs.

Walsh, who accompanied Wynne, said he arranged the visit “to ensure that the highest-ranking officials within the Air Force

recognize the full value this base brings to our nation’s air defense system.”

The 174th Fighter Wing stationed at Hancock has a rich history, beginning with active duty in France during the Berlin crisis in 1961-1962. It was one of only two Air National Guard units to fly combat missions during Operation Desert Storm. The unit also flew patrols in Iraq’s no-fly zones.

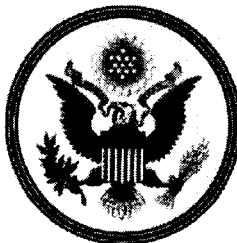
After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, 174th pilots also flew security patrols over New York City and the Northeast.

The base employs 1,400 soldiers and staff. The Predator squadron could add another 450 positions.

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As a first step in the BRAC process, HUD has prepared a tool kit to make communities aware of some of HUD's resources available to them. This tool kit is available online[1] or you can call (404) 331-5001 ext. 2680 for a copy. The links at this website will enable BRAC communities to get more detailed information to assist them in the restructuring of their affected communities. Also available is the Department of Defense's website for complete information on the BRAC program[2].

Working through the local HUD offices in the Southeast, the HUD team is available to cities, local redevelopment authorities, and other interested parties (e.g., lenders, developers, nonprofits, etc.) to help them navigate through the agency's programs and processes. The HUD staff offers a variety of expertise in developing partnerships in both the public and private sectors. Visit the HUD Field Office Directors[3] webpage where you can find their phone numbers.

[1] <http://www.hud.gov/local/shared/working/r4/ofs/?state=al>

[2] <http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/>

[3] <http://www.hud.gov/localoffices.cfm>.

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and closures, overseas basing, work force transitioning and A-76 competitive sourcing -issues that leaders feel DeCA must be ready for and adapt to in order to provide the commissary benefit more effectively and efficiently.

“This year we had a different approach. We identified goal captains to lead teams to research our goals before our conference met. We have three main goals and we evaluate where we are in relationship to those goals, determine what new strategies we need to put on our plate to support the commissary benefit in the future, and move forward,” said Patrick B. Nixon, chief executive officer and acting director.

Bob Vitikacs, director of sales, and Keith Hagenbuch, director of performance and policy, are captains of one goal that deals with DeCA’s core mission of delivering the commissary benefit as it relates to sales, facilities and equipment. Jerry Oestreich, director of human resources, and Pam Conklin, chief financial executive, are captains of the second goal dealing with the future of DeCA’s work force. Vicki Archileti, director of corporate planning, and Gerald Adair, director of systems engineering, are captains of the third goal that deals with business infrastructure.

Goal captains continue their work after the conference. Each goal is linked to integrated groups of process owners. If DeCA is going to pursue Internet shopping, somebody owns that project and is responsible for getting it done as well as working with the various disciplines in DeCA to make it happen. If DeCA is doing a prototype work force, someone owns that and is the go-to person responsible for reporting progress and results, Nixon said.

Kevin Robinson, 804/734-8773,
kevin.robinson@deca.mil.

Unattributed. 2006. **“Mobile Selects Tetra Tech, CH2M Hill for Environmental Services Contracts.”** Corps Report 14/for (February 15): 32.

The Mobile District has awarded architect-engineering contracts for environmental support services to two firms. Tetra Tech Inc. of Fairfax, Va., and CH2M Hill Inc. of Atlanta will each provide services to the district covering environmental work associated with the Defense Department’s Base Realignment and Closure Program. The range of activities will include water quality studies, contaminated site analysis, land use plans, mitigation plans, and master planning for facilities designated as BRAC sites. The contracts also cover regulatory compliance measures. Each contract is valued at \$1.2 million.

Contact: Mike Betteker, project manager, Tetra Tech, (703) 385-6000; David Urbina, manager of business development, CH2M Hill, (770) 604-9095.

Unattributed. 2006. **“Sen. Roberts Meets DOD Official Discusses Effects of Base Realignment and Closures on Kansas Communities.”** US Fed News (February 24).

Topeka, Kan., Feb. 24 – The office of Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., issued the following press release:

Sen. Pat Roberts met with Patrick O’Brien, Director of the Office of Economic Adjustment under the Secretary of Defense, to discuss economic development in Kansas

communities in light of the recent Base Realignment and Closures (BRAC) recommendations.

“I was pleased to welcome Director O’Brien to Kansas,” Senator Roberts said. “Our state was the first stop on his tour of BRAC communities. This action builds on the teamwork of already strong state and local leadership, especially in Parsons. I am encouraged to see the Department of Defense focus a great deal of attention on the needs of Kansas communities who play a role in the nation’s defense.”

In discussions with Director O’Brien, Senator Roberts learned that the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) will sponsor a search for a qualified candidate to serve as the Executive Director of the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant Local Redevelopment Planning Authority. This person will coordinate state, local and federal initiatives to redevelop the Parsons Army Ammunition Plant.

Senator Roberts said he will continue to work with OEA to assist Ft. Riley communities in preparing for the arrival of more than 3,400 soldiers and their families. Roberts asked Director O’Brien to help with the wide scale development predicted for the region as families start to settle in the surrounding towns as well as the development the Department of Defense is already doing on post.

Senator Roberts is a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Sarah Ross Little, 202/224-4774.

* * * * *

Unattributed. 2006. **“Elk ‘Mugged’ on Closing Naval Base.”** US Fed News (February 24).

Concorde, Calif., Feb. 24 * The U.S. Navy issued the following press release:

The California Department of Fish and Game started “mugging” Tule Elk Feb. 13, in an effort to relocate them from Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment Concord.

The base is closing under the Department of Defense’s Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, with portions of it being designated as wildlife preserve.

“‘Mugging’, the use of helicopter mounted net guns to aid in the capture of large game, is preferred to using tranquilizers, because it doesn’t introduce foreign chemicals into the elk’s bloodstream,” said Tom Swauger, public affairs director of the California Department of Fish and Game.

The 46 elk that make up this herd have been living on the base for 30 years. They are being introduced to three herds in surrounding areas, with the majority being moved to Cache Creek, Calif., north of San Francisco.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, as well as students from the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of California at Davis, volunteered in the capture, examination, and relocation process. Some elk were tagged during examination for scientific research.

“The elk were a pleasurable sight,” Richard Pieper, caretaker for Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment Concord, said. “It gave me a good feeling to see nature in its rightful place.”

The Tule Elk, which are protected under the Tule Elk Preservation Act of 1976, have slowly been making a comeback in California. During the turn of the last century, there were less than a dozen. Currently, there are 3,800 elk in 22 herds across the state.

For more news from around the fleet, visit www.navy.mil.

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Henry C. Jackson. 2006. **“Vilsack Calls for More Input on National Guard Decisions.”** Associated Press Newswires February 28, 2006

Des Moines, Iowa (AP) -Gov. Tom Vilsack said Monday that the Bush administration had adopted a “trust me attitude” toward National Guard troop deployments, and he called on the president to give the nation’s governors a more active role in the discussion.

“Governors ought to be engaged and involved in making that decision,” he said by telephone from the National Governor’s Association’s winter meeting in Washington, D.C. “That certainly wasn’t done with the (base realignment and closure) process and it hasn’t been done with this process.”

Vilsack said the nation’s governors – Republicans and Democrats alike – were concerned about how the federal government would help states pay for increased troop levels and replacing equipment sent abroad. He spoke about those concerns after the governors met

Monday with President Bush and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Next year, 333,000 National Guard troops will be funded by the federal government – down from 350,000 that are funded this year. Vilsack said federal officials have pledged to find money in the budget should recruitment exceed the number of troops that were funded, but he expressed skepticism about where the funding would come from.

“We have no assurance, in fact, the money will be available,” Vilsack said, “and no assurance where it will be taken from in terms of our priorities.”

Other topics brought up by the governors during their meeting with President Bush included the war in Iraq and the war on terrorism, immigration, the National Security Agency’s domestic surveillance program and the Medicare prescription drug program.

Vilsack said the governors were concerned about the May 15 cutoff date for the Medicare program and suggested possibly extending the deadline.

“Considering that there’s been so much confusion, we might want to give people more time,” he said.

Jim Hodges. 2006. **“Should Fort Become a National Park?”** Daily Press (Newport News, VA) February 24, 2006

At a community forum Thursday night, some suggested the idea was an opportunity. Others prefer new development.

For those who have long thought of Fort Monroe as a city asset and now consider it

an economic opportunity for the city, there was a disagreeing opinion.

“We consider historic Fort Monroe a national treasure,” Louis Guy, president of the Norfolk Historical Society, told a town hall meeting Thursday in Phoebus.

For those who anticipate the loss of 7 percent of Hampton’s economy being remedied by taxes from new construction on waterfront property when Fort Monroe closes in 2011, there was the suggestion of a greater good.

It should be a national park with a historic bent, more than one person told the audience of about 200 and WHRO television cameras at the American Theater.

The Daily Press was a co-sponsor.

The park idea has become a recurring theme to Bob Harper, chairman of the Federal Area Development Authority, which is overseeing efforts to determine Fort Monroe’s destiny now that the Base Realignment and Closure commission has worked its will to close the facility.

“We’ve been receiving those ideas on the (city) Web site,” he said. “I’m not surprised.”

Several respondents on a panel of officials and experts in the process pointed out problems with the property reverting to a national park.

One is that the federal government has not indicated that it wants Fort Monroe after 2011.

“The National Park Service is underfunded by about \$600 million,” said Brian DeProfio, assistant to the Hampton city

manager. He is concentrating on BRAC and Fort Monroe.

“... They aren’t champing at the bit to take on Fort Monroe, but that doesn’t mean we won’t proceed in that direction (if that decision to do so is made).”

And Joe Bouchard, who worked with base reuse during the 1995 BRAC round while on the National Security Council, suggested another problem – and a remedy – with a park.

“Historic renovation and community development are not mutually exclusive,” he said. “You can be in a position to retain history ... instead of risking having to hope that Congress will appropriate money to support you year after year after year.”

Daniel Witter. 2006. “**Beale Leader Leaving.**” Appeal-Democrat (Marysville, CA) (February 25).

Brig. Gen. Larry Wells, commander of the 9th Reconnaissance Wing at Beale Air Force Base, will take a post at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, according to Beale officials.

Wells will be replaced by Brig. Gen. (select) Harry D. Polumbo Jr., currently assistant deputy director of Global Operations, J-39, with the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, D.C.

No date has been set for the change of command or when Wells will leave the base. He will become assistant director of Air and Space Operations at Air Combat Command at Langley.

“It’s truly been my honor and personal privilege to have served with such sterling warriors and community leaders,” said Wells, who has lived at Beale with his wife, Kathy, and three children since August 2004.

“Kathy and I are thrilled to be part of Team Beale and will miss the many friends we’ve made here.” Wells said. “We look forward to our new assignment where we can spread the good news of all that Beale and the local community have to offer.”

Wells said he enjoys leading the 9th Reconnaissance Wing and regrets leaving so soon.

“We hope we’ve made a difference while serving with you and will always have fond memories of all the many experiences we’ve shared.”

In his new role, Wells expects to be deeply involved in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and still deal with Beale Air Force Base.

“The new job entails an increase in responsibility to organize, train and equip our warriors serving in the Air Force’s largest command,” he said. “We look forward to taking on new and interesting challenges.”

During a short phone interview, Polumbo said he and his wife, Sandra, are looking forward to joining Beale.

“I’m really excited to be coming to Beale,” he said.

Wells took command of Beale in August 2004, shortly before the first Global Hawk aircraft arrived.

The Global Hawk is capable of flying unmanned at altitudes above 65,000 feet for more than 24 hours.

Before leading Beale, Wells was the chief of F/A-22 System Management Organization and deputy director of Requirements for Air Combat Command headquarters.

Wells is an F-16 pilot with more than 2,400 hours of flight time in the aircraft. During his assignment at Beale, Wells was also trained to fly the U-2 and the T-38, both of which operate out of Beale.

Wells oversaw Beale during the recent Base Realignment and Closure process, which left Beale relatively unscathed, although 179 positions will be phased out and the 940th Air Refueling Wing will be folded into the Global Hawk program.

Polumbo takes over Beale as the Air Force proposes to phase out the U-2 by 2011. The proposal has yet to be approved by Congress and President Bush as part of the budget process.

Details on the phase out are not yet available, nor are potential impacts to Beale.

The proposed retirement of the U-2 would occur as the Global Hawk takes on a larger role. By 2012, Beale will have 51 Global Hawk aircraft.

Appeal-Democrat reporter Daniel Witter can be reached at 749-4712. You may e-mail him at dwitter@appeal-democrat.com.

The Associated Press. 2006. “**Walter Reed’s Closing Means Another Move for Museum of the Macabre.**” Associated Press Newswires (February 25, 12:25).

Washington (AP) * The National Museum of Health and Medicine might get a new home.

The museum, which has collected thousands of medical oddities, has been located on the campus of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center since 1971.

But last summer, the Base Closure and Realignment Commission voted to close the military hospital and move many of its medical services to Bethesda by 2011.

The commission doesn't indicate what will happen to the museum, other than to say it won't be "disestablished." But it's expected to move with the hospital to Bethesda.

It would be the museum's tenth move since its founding in 1862.

Previous locations have included the National Mall, where the museum drew as many as 765-thousand people a year. Attendance has declined since then, but many are still curious about the exhibits, which include a giant hair ball that once filled the stomach of a 12-year-old girl.

On the Net:

National Museum of Health and Medicine:
<http://www.nmhm.washingtondc.museum>

Unattributed. 2006. "**MD HB 1576, 2006-2006.**" LegAlert (February 25).

Delegates Rudolph, Glassman, James, and Kohl; Establishing the BRAC Marketing and Infrastructure Improvement Program in the Department of Business and Economic Development; providing for the

administration of the Program; providing for financial assistance for infrastructure improvements in specified counties; establishing an advisory committee for the Program; requiring the Governor to include a specified appropriation for the Program; etc.

20060222 * (H) FIRST READING HOUSE RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

The Associated Press. 2006. "**Prosecutor Calls for 18-Year Jail Term for Uzbek Opposition Leader.**" Associated Press Newswires (February 24, 09:18).

Tashkent, Uzbekistan (AP) * An Uzbek prosecutor on Friday demanded an 18-year prison term for an opposition leader standing trial on charges of tax evasion and other economic crimes, his lawyer said.

Sandjar Umarov, the chairman of the Sunshine Uzbekistan group, pleaded innocent to all charges. His group was a vocal critic of last May's bloody suppression of an uprising in the eastern city of Andijan. Rights groups say troops fired on unarmed protesters and say the death toll was as high as 700; the government says 187 people died and that the uprising was provoked by Islamic extremists.

Prosecutor Gennady Davletov said Friday that Umarov's guilt had been proven and asked the City Court in the capital, Tashkent, to sentence him to 18 years in prison, his lawyer Valery Krasilovsky said.

Krasilovsky said that the accusations leveled at the trial were based solely on witness testimonies. "We never heard any analysis

or reference to any documents” from prosecutors, he said.

Sunshine Uzbekistan has urged the government of President Islam Karimov to start economic and social reforms.

Karimov, who has ruled the Central Asian nation since 1989, has conducted a crackdown on political foes and dissident Muslims, shutting down opposition parties and jailing thousands.

Facing Western criticism, Karimov’s government has refused an international inquiry into the Andijan events and evicted U.S. troops from a military base that was used for operations in Afghanistan.

Jack Dorsey. 2006. **“Retire JFK Now, Says Fleet Forces Commander.”** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (February 24): B1.

The Florida-based aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy should be retired “as rapidly as possible,” said Adm. John B. Nathman, the fleet commander here.

That could happen as early as March, with the following three to four months needed to physically place it in retirement, freeing the 2,200 sailors aboard for reassignment, he said.

“It is the right thing to do for the men and women on that ship,” Nathman said. “It is actually the right thing to do for the ship because the decision has been made.”

Virginia officials are interested in the 38-year-old Kennedy’s status because a Hampton Roads-based carrier * along with its economic benefits * possibly could be reassigned to Florida as a replacement.

Nathman, who completed his first year in the Norfolk-based Fleet Forces Command on Saturday, talked in his first in-depth interview about major issues facing the Atlantic and Pacific fleets he is responsible for training and equipping.

It’s been a fast-paced year with no let up in sight, he said. The Navy has put more boots on the ground in the Middle East to relieve Army and Marine Corps troops; worked to open an outlying airfield in Washington County, N.C.; tried to create an under-water sonar test range 60 miles off the North Carolina coast; and fought to protect Oceana Naval Air Station as a master jet base.

The actual retirement date for the Kennedy hinges on legislation that would repeal a recent law requiring the Navy to maintain at least 12 aircraft carriers, Nathman said. Retiring the Kennedy would drop the carrier force to 11.

After the release of the Defense Department’s Quadrennial Defense Review earlier this month, U.S. Sen. John Warner, R-Va., agreed to sponsor a bill that would take the Navy off the hook for that mandate.

“If we get the language removed, in pragmatic terms, it allows us to make the decommissioning decision sooner, allows us to make it in a very timely way for the Navy and the crew, and allows us not to make big investments in sustaining it,” Nathman said.

Trying to sustain the aging oil-fired carrier would be a losing proposition in Nathman’s view. There is no reason to expose the ship and crew to a deteriorating condition, he said.

Because the Kennedy never received the last portion of a \$350 million overhaul, which

was to have been done in Hampton Roads in the past year, it began to rapidly deteriorate, he said.

On Wednesday, inspectors were in Mayport, Fla., the Kennedy's home port, where they were expected to decertify half of its boilers, which produce steam for propulsion.

Last week the ship's arresting cable gear was decertified, meaning it can no longer land fixed-wing planes, only helicopters. Two of its four catapults also have been shut down.

"You would have to put almost \$200 million to get it back to operational status at sea, and you would still need another \$2 billion to get it back to where it needs to be," Nathman said.

That money is better used elsewhere in the fleet, he said.

The Kennedy, built in Newport News between 1964-68, most likely would be taken to Philadelphia to spend its final years in mothballs, said Pat Dolan, a spokeswoman for the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington.

It's the only deep-water facility the Navy has on the East Coast to keep such ships, she said.

As to what might replace the Kennedy in Mayport, Nathman said he doesn't know.

The Navy will spend \$10 million on an environmental impact statement to see whether it should dredge and renovate the Mayport piers to accept a nuclear-powered carrier.

"Do you want to home-base a nuke there?" he asked. "Do you want to put in

amphibious ships, put in surface warfare ships, or do nothing?"

"The EIS needs to be done that will allow us to say what is the best case from either a strategic homeporting issue, or what are the best economic values."

Nathman, who previously served as vice chief of naval operation, said the long-term viability of Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach is tied to the need to build a second outlying landing field, referred to as an OLF.

The Navy is under court order to conduct additional environmental analysis on the impact of placing the proposed field in Washington County and has reopened considerations of four other sites for consideration.

The OLF is needed to relieve carrier landing practices at the Navy's auxiliary landing field at Fentress in Chesapeake, Nathman said.

Virginia Beach and Virginia officials are under pressure from the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission to roll back development around Oceana for it to continue as a master jet base.

"I believe in the long-term viability of Oceana, but you have to have the OLF," Nathman said. The field is opposed by local farmers and environmentalists.

If the OLF is not built, "I don't see how we can be good neighbors in the long term."

The Navy's F/A-18 Super Hornets are scheduled to be based at Oceana for 30 more years, he said. He's confident that with the continued efforts by the Virginia Beach and state governments, Oceana will remain.

“I was in the BRAC debates from the service standpoint,” he said. “I know the military value of Oceana. I know why the Navy never put it on the list to begin with. I understand why the BRAC Commission went after Oceana, because they saw the encroachment, the training issues and the safety issues.”

Reach Jack Dorsey at (757) 446-2284 or jack.dorsey@pilotonline.com.

The Associated Press. 2006. “**Air Force Secretary Visits Syracuse Air National Guard Unit.**” Associated Press Newswires (February 24, 15:34).

Syracuse, N.Y. (AP) * U.S. Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne spent three hours here Friday visiting the Hancock Air National Guard Base which has been chosen for one of the Air Force’s Predator aircraft squadrons.

The Predator, operated by a two-member crew on the ground, is used mostly for gathering intelligence and surveillance but can be armed with missiles fired by remote control.

Wynne was given a private base tour and a closed-door briefing on the \$63 million in improvements undertaken at Hancock since 1996, said U.S. Rep. James Walsh, the area’s congressman and chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs.

Walsh, who accompanied Wynne, said he arranged the visit “to ensure that the highest-ranking officials within the Air Force

recognize the full value this base brings to our nation’s air defense system.”

The 174th Fighter Wing stationed at Hancock has a rich history, beginning with active duty in France during the Berlin crisis in 1961-1962. It was one of only two Air National Guard units to fly combat missions during Operation Desert Storm. The unit also flew patrols in Iraq’s no-fly zones.

After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, 174th pilots also flew security patrols over New York City and the Northeast.

The base employs 1,400 soldiers and staff. The Predator squadron could add another 450 positions.

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“Schools’ Part of BRAC Equation is Lousy Math.”

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Unattributed. 2006. **“Robey and Merdon to Join Efforts for BRAC Committee.”** The Baltimore (MD) Sun (March 5).

County Executive James N. Robey and County Council Chairman Christopher J. Merdon have agreed to combine their efforts in creating a committee that will examine the effect of the thousands of government jobs heading to the region from the nationwide consolidation of military bases.

In January, the two announced plans to form similar committees that would analyze how the Base Closure and Realignment process would affect the county’s schools, roads, housing and businesses. But Robey announced Friday that Merdon would be withdrawing his council resolution to form a committee.

In a statement, Merdon said: “The County Council looks forward to working with County Executive Robey on the formation of his task force as well as helping to address the impacts the BRAC recommendations will have on Howard County.”

It is estimated that the BRAC process will bring 11,400 government jobs to Fort Meade, just over the Howard County line in Anne Arundel County, and to Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County.

The 25-member task force will be formed by executive order, and its members will be named by the end of the month, Robey’s statement said.

Timoth J. Gibbons. 2006. **"Spaceport Hopes for Cecil Could Take Flight."** The Florida Times-Union (Jacksonville, FL) (February 19): G1.

After the fight that residents near Cecil Commerce Center put up against Navy jets coming to the site, the idea of spaceships taking off from the Westside isn't one that might be popular.

But the Jacksonville Aviation Authority and the Florida Space Authority think Cecil has a good shot at becoming a spaceport, so garnering such support becomes a political necessity.

That situation is what saw a bus-load of airport executives and residents from the Westside and Clay County heading out to Cape Canaveral last week for a meeting with Space Authority staff members.

The result? "I can't think of a better place than Cecil as far as what the Florida Space Authority would be looking for," said Russell Stalvey, treasurer of the Better Westside Project, the group that fought against turning Cecil into a master jet base, as suggested by Mayor John Peyton during last year's federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission process. "It would be a good fit."

Following the meeting at Kennedy Space Center, Stalvey – a pilot – and others on the trip said a spaceport is a better fit for the area than a jet base because launches would be much less frequent, and the planes being used would be a whisper compared to the roar of the jets. Rather than the hundreds of thousands of jets that take off from a master jet base each year, a space port would be

expected to see a couple of handfuls of flights.

Cecil had housed the Navy jets for decades before it was closed in 1993 and the aircraft transferred to Virginia. The 17,000-acre site is now mostly empty: No one has moved into the city side of what is now called Cecil Commerce Center, although the 6,000 acres owned by the Aviation Authority have attracted a number of tenants, from aircraft maintenance companies to military training specialists.

Now, the authority is looking to attract businesses that want to use the site's 12,500-foot-long runway to launch vehicles into space. The launches would be horizontal, with the spacecraft piggy-backing on the equivalent of commercial airplanes.

"It's important we get in the game and not end up being behind the curve," Aviation Authority spokesman Michael Stewart said. "I think everyone understands the urgency."

That sense of urgency is on the minds of those who work at the Florida Space Authority, which is spearheading the push to set up a commercial spaceport within the state. Although Cape Canaveral has long been the storied home of America's space program, other states are busily trying to attract those who are commercializing such programs. Companies are launching satellites and research projects from the Kodiak Launch Complex in Alaska, the nation's first non-federally owned commercial spaceport, and there are space tourism ventures under way in New Mexico, where the state legislature last week approved a \$100 million capital program for a spaceport.

On Friday, a company that sent a tourist into space last year announced that it will

develop a \$265 million spaceport in the United Arab Emirates, and Singapore is expected to soon announce its own plans to develop a spaceport.

“Right now, the game is ours to lose – but we can lose it,” said Tracy Hegler, director of planning and spaceport transportation for the state authority. A Florida spaceport would be designed to compete with the operations already in existence or the planning stages, sending up tourists and small payloads.

Cecil is the first choice of the staff members . Working on the project, Space Authority Executive Director Winston Scott, a former astronaut, told the Jacksonville visitors last week. With the infrastructure already in place at the former base, as well as its location near the ocean, the site would be ideal for a pilot program, Scott said, since it wouldn’t require investment in things like extending runways.

The state’s next step to space will come next month, when the Space Authority meets in Tallahassee for its quarterly meeting. Authority staff members plan to ask for permission to enter into a memorandum of understanding with Jacksonville, which could kick off the process of getting a federal spaceport license, a project that would take at least 18 months.

The authority board, led by Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings, has also considered holding a competition among interested spaceports. Scott said Cecil would clearly be expected to win such a face-off.

Although the process is still in its early stages, at least some of those who live in the area are embracing the promise of a spaceport – and whatever jobs and ancillary benefits it brings along with it.

“It’s going to get off the ground,” said Carl Moore, president of Westside Business Leaders. “If we don’t get on board now, we’re going to lose. This is a positive for Jacksonville. We just have to act on it.”

timothy.gibbons@jacksonville.com, (904) 359-4103

Ryan Huff. 2006. **“Military Stakes Claim to Station.”** Contra Costa Times (Walnut Creek, CA) (March 3).

Military officials want to take three bites out of prime Concord Naval Weapons Station real estate that city officials hope to develop.

If that happens, Concord might have to cut in half its 18-hole Diablo Creek Golf Course and scale back its development plans for the recently closed military base.

For various military purposes, the Defense Department and Coast Guard want to hold on to the nearly 400 acres that either straddles Highway 4 or is within walking distance of the North Concord/Martinez BART station. Such a grab would subtract 15 percent of the land the city wants to develop.

Concord leaders say those properties are crucial to their plans for a high-density transit village and businesses along the freeway.

But the city has no power to stop the military because the federal government owns the 5,170-acre inland part of the base and can decide what it wants to keep before the city can dream how to reuse it.

That process is part of a standard program where any federal agency can request property from the Navy through March 23.

While the Navy will listen to advice from the Concord City Council, experts say the military usually supports its fellow branches' requests for property.

"They get first dibs," said Harry Kelso, who leads Base Closure Partners, a redevelopment consultant. "The fact they are first in the pecking order, it would lead you to believe the chances of them getting what they want is pretty good."

So far, the military branches' request to get land from the Navy includes:

- * 61 acres for the Coast Guard's existing 316 occupied housing units south of the BART station.

- * 30 acres for the National Guard to build a regional emergency operations center that might replace armories in Pittsburg, Concord and Walnut Creek.

- * 291 acres north of Highway 4 for the Army to operate a fire station, railroad maintenance yard and administration offices.

In November, Congress approved closing the base's inland portion in a cost-cutting move that will save the federal government millions of dollars annually.

The Army will continue to run the Suisun Bay port and says it needs the land near Highway 4 to support those operations. That property includes two-thirds of the city's Diablo Creek Golf Course.

If that goes through, the city would have to reduce the size of its course because Concord leases about 100 acres from the military.

"It would mean a nine-hole golf course," Concord City Manager Lydia Du Borg quipped.

As for the Coast Guard housing property, the city has a bargaining chip.

Concord leaders support building new housing elsewhere on the base with full city services to replace the 316 units of Coast Guard duplexes and townhouses that currently sit on Navy land. The one-story, white duplexes were built in 1965, while the town homes are 17 years old.

Concord would prefer to build condominiums and other high-density residences near the BART station to encourage alternatives to automobile commuting, Du Borg said.

The Coast Guard stands by its request for the 61-acre property but is willing to talk with city officials about a replacement housing site.

"We're always open to discussions," said Senior Chief Petty Officer John Moss, a Coast Guard spokesman. "But at this point, I don't want to characterize (the city's proposal) with positive or negative feedback."

The city intends to build as many as 13,000 homes on the former base, create 15,500 jobs and preserve about half the land for open space, parks and trails, according to Concord's draft general plan.

A substantial reduction of the 5,170 acres currently available could mean cutting back on those numbers.

These military requests are far from a done deal. The Navy will evaluate each proposal

and make a decision later this year, said Jill Votaw, a Navy base reuse spokeswoman.

"We want to balance the needs of federal agencies with needs of the local community," she said. "It's a partnership."

Ryan Huff covers Concord and Clayton. Reach him at 925-977-8471 or rhuff@cctimes.com.

Wayne Woolley. 2006. **"Guard Chief Reports Stress Syndrome Soaring with Vets."** The Star-Ledger (Newark, NJ) (March 3): 21.

New Jersey's top military officer said yesterday the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs more than doubled its budget this year to treat veterans for post-traumatic stress disorder.

At a hearing of the state Senate Judiciary Committee, during which he was unanimously endorsed for a second term as adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Glenn Rieth said his department budgeted \$800,000 this year * up from \$300,000 the previous year * for post-traumatic stress disorder treatment for veterans, some of whom fought in Iraq or Afghanistan. He said he may seek more funding in the next fiscal year, which begins in July.

"About 25 percent of the kids are having some problems," Rieth said. "It's not just New Jersey's problem. It's America's problem."

During the 30-minute hearing, Rieth also said he will be "fully engaged" in efforts to reuse Fort Monmouth after the Pentagon closes it in 2010.

A career National Guard officer, Rieth was named to the Cabinet post by Gov. James E. McGreevey in 2002. He was renominated by Gov. Jon Corzine in January and is expected to be confirmed by the full Senate March 13.

As adjutant general, Rieth, 48, oversees the agency that provides services to New Jersey's 600,000 veterans. He also commands the 5,900 soldiers and 2,400 airmen of the state National Guard.

State-funded treatment for veterans with post-traumatic stress or other mental health problems supplements wider programs run by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, which is responsible for the bulk of veterans' medical care.

President Bush's proposed VA budget calls for \$2.2 billion for mental health treatment, including post-traumatic stress disorder. A recent Army study found one-third of the troops who served in Iraq sought psychological help in the year after their return.

Lt. Col. Roberta Niedt, a military and Veterans Affairs spokeswoman, said the state mental health program is handling 1,125 cases of post-traumatic stress disorder. The number includes New Jersey National Guard troops and other service members who have returned from combat zones over the past two years, as well as veterans of previous wars.

The numbers are on the rise. In 2004, the state handled 118 new cases, and the number increased to 268 last year. There have been 82 new cases since January, including 26 National Guardsmen or reservists who served in Iraq.

"At this rate, there's potential to have 400 by the end of the year," Niedt said. "You

can see the potential for this to continue to increase.”

Niedt said she anticipates the increase because of two factors: the continuing return of troops from Iraq and the establishment in April of a state hotline for veterans’ mental health issues.

In addition, she said, veterans have become less reluctant to ask for help. “The stigma is being removed from post-traumatic stress,” Niedt said.

At yesterday’s hearing, Sen. Joseph Kyrillos (R-Monmouth) asked Rieth about his agency’s role in the future of Fort Monmouth, the Army communications research center ordered closed by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission last year. State officials are trying to ensure that the installation’s 1,100 acres in Monmouth County are smoothly turned over to local control after the closure. The effort also includes creating high-tech jobs to replace the 15,000 high-paying civilian defense jobs related to Fort Monmouth.

Rieth said Corzine has directed him to play a major role in the transition back to local control after the fort closes and its mission moves to the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland.

“The governor has made it clear that as the state’s top military officer, he wants me fully engaged,” Rieth said.

Rieth said his agency will be given greater responsibility for protecting the state’s six other major military installations from future Pentagon cutbacks. No individual state agency had this responsibility in the past.

Kerry Dougherty. 2006. **“Schools’ Part of BRAC Equation is Lousy Math.”** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 2): B1.

After decades of shamelessly canoodling with developers and allowing all manner of outrageous encroachment around Oceana Naval Air Station, there are now plans afoot at City Hall to force Virginia Beach schools to take a financial hit in order to keep the master jet base in town.

Sheesh.

A memo, sent Monday by Assistant Superintendent Kathleen O’Hara to all school employees, warns that city staff wants the schools to pony up 51.79 percent of the costs of complying with Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission demands.

That’d be almost \$4 million out of the school budget.

According to O’Hara’s memo, the School Board learned last weekend that school administrators “had been informed by city management that the school system may be asked to share the cost of implementing BRAC recommendations.”

BRAC ordered the Beach to buy up land around Oceana and spend at least \$15 million a year doing so to keep the base open. The state is paying half, which means the city officials want schools to pay a little more than half of the remaining \$7.5 million.

Hmmm. What should schools cut? Milk in the cafeterias? Heat in the classrooms? Textbooks?

None of the above.

The kids didn't make this mess. The kids shouldn't pay for it.

It's bad enough that the taxpayers have to underwrite years of municipal folly. Then again, they bear some of the blame for electing and re-electing council members who were indifferent to the Navy.

Vicki Lucente, chief financial officer for Beach schools, told me Wednesday that she and School Superintendent Sheila Magula learned about this at a meeting with City Manager Jim Spore and the city's director of management services, Catheryn Whitesell, on Feb. 22.

City staffers told the school administrators that it was in the best interest of the schools to keep the master jet base open, therefore, the school division should share the cost.

Ultimately, City Council members will have to decide whether to squeeze the schools. It's an election year. Perhaps they'll do something sane and find the dough in their own budget.

Virginia Beach schools are an unqualified success. Despite a significant number of needy students * more than a quarter of Beach kids qualify for free and reduced-price lunches * every school in the city is fully accredited.

Last year Standard & Poor's selected Virginia Beach as an "outperforming" school division because its student achievement is unexpectedly high.

Beach residents without children also earn big dividends from the schools. The city's skyrocketing real estate values are related in no small part to the city's excellent education system.

The proposed school budget * which will be tweaked by the School Board * totals \$682.1 million. That's \$79 million more than last year, an increase of about 13 percent.

Before taxpayers start screaming, Lucente notes that \$21 million of the increase is unavoidable. It's earmarked for increases in the state retirement and insurance programs.

Keep in mind, too, that schools are greatly affected by fuel costs. Think it hurts to fill up your Ford Escort? Try gassing up 600 school buses every day.

Was your electric bill shocking last month? Try heating and lighting 125 sites.

There are also new initiatives in the proposed spending plan. School officials want to add one full-day kindergarten class to each elementary school. These extended classes will be offered to youngsters who show early signs of weakness in literacy.

That's not an expense; it's an investment.

Virginia Beach public schools provide outstanding educational opportunities to 74,113 children every day.

Any council member who thinks it's smart to raid the schools to pay for BRAC should go to the blackboard, grab a piece of chalk and write this 74,113 times:

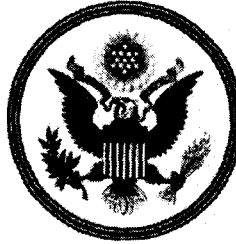
I will not make the kids pay for the council's mistakes.

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Chris Flores. 2006. **"Budget Cuts Threaten Cities, NN Mayor Says."** Daily Press (Newport News, VA) (March 1): C4.

In his state-of-the-city speech, Joe Frank says localities must join together to protect the future of federal facilities.

Newport News Mayor Joe Frank said Tuesday that Hampton Roads localities must band together to regularly fend off budget cuts that threaten the region's federal facilities that anchor the economy.

In his state-of-the-city speech, Frank called for the creation of a new alliance that will monitor the region's military and federal facilities like Jefferson Lab. There was a time when the region could depend on federal money, said Frank.

"Today, that is no longer the case," he said.

Frank said the new group was endorsed by the Hampton Roads Mayors and Chairs Caucus, which includes political leaders of the area's 16 cities and counties. The goal is to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of all federal facilities so the group can support and protect them.

Newport News progressed economically in 2005 with the continued development of Port Warwick, City Center and the expansion of the Patrick Henry retail corridor. And the city was lucky to gain jobs at Fort Eustis after the Base Realignment and Closure Commission process resulted in the closure of Hampton's Fort Monroe.

But defense cuts to Navy programs may hurt the Northrop Grumman Newport News shipyard, Frank said. The threat of moving an aircraft carrier from the region is looming. And cuts have hurt NASA Langley, which continues to be at risk. Jefferson Lab had its budget cut last year, but is slated for a big increase next year.

George Cahlink. 2006. **"House Lawmakers Concerned About DoD Budget, Plans For Guard and Reserve."** Defense Daily 229/26 (February 9).

House Armed Service Committee (HASC) yesterday members raised concerns about the Pentagon's plans for the Army Reserve and Army National Guard and suggested Congress should increase the Defense Department's overall \$439 billion budget request.

Rep. Ike Skelton (D-Mo.), the top Democrat on HASC, questioned a Pentagon proposal to only provide money for 334,000 Army National Guard troops and 200,000 Army reservists in 2007, even though the Guard is authorized to have as many as 350,000 soldiers and the Reserve 205,000. "It appears to be a polite way of downsizing," Skelton said.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said repeatedly at a HASC hearing yesterday the Army National Guard and Reserve were not being downsized, but only given money for the actual number of troops in the reserve component. He said the Army National Guard could be funded at a higher level if it attracted more troops but there was not reason to do so until then.

Skelton, however, said the National Guard had recently had strong recruiting and said

the money was needed now. "So where does the money come from? To train, equip and man the additional troops, we need \$810 million. What's wrong with fully funding them?" he asked.

HASC Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.) said the Iraq war had placed "enormous strains" on the armed forces and called on lawmakers to "seriously consider raising the top line." He said the Pentagon's overall budget shows a seven percent increase, but most of that pays for military base realignment closures and the Army's move to a more modular force.

"When you factor in inflation, BRAC and Army modularity, the FY 2007 budget request is only 1.4 percent above the FY 2006 enacted level," said Hunter, adding the nation spends only 3.9 percent of its gross domestic product on defense currently compared to 9 percent under President John Kennedy.

Hunter warned the Pentagon against making "tradeoffs" that cut troops to pay for modernizing the military.

Other lawmakers also raised concerns that the Pentagon budget did not provide enough funding for specific areas.

Rep. Vic Snyder (D-Ark.) said the Pentagon's science and technology (S&T) budget cut basic research by 3 percent and applied research by 13 percent over last year's S&T funding.

Rumsfeld, however, said Congress had added nearly \$3 billion to the Pentagon's S&T and the Pentagon's initial request last year was lower than the proposal for 2007. He said DoD science and technology spending has increased over the last five

years going from \$7.8 billion in 2002 to \$11.1 billion in 2007.

Rep. John McHugh (R.N.Y.), chairman of the committee's personnel subcommittee, questioned hundreds of millions of dollars the Pentagon hopes to save beginning in 2007 by raising healthcare insurance premiums for military retirees and assuming they will seek fewer services. "What happens if you don't achieve it?" he asked.

Unattributed. 2006. "**Kan. Democratic Party.**" US Fed News (March 6).

Sen. Hensley -- Four More Years

The Kansas Democratic Party issued the following statement:

There is an expression in politics and whenever it is used by the Republicans it drives me crazy. But, in this year, Democrats can use this expression as it applies to the re-election of our Governor, Kathleen Sebelius.

The expression is: "Four More Years."

This is my 30th year in the Kansas Legislature.

In the last 30 years, the revenue for state government has declined three times:

In 1986, revenue dropped 1%.

In 1998, following a series of Bill Graves' tax cuts, revenue declined 1%.

In 2002, Graves last year, state government receipts plummeted 7%.

When Governor Sebelius was sworn into office she inherited from her Republican

predecessor a \$12 million balance in our state's treasury, and a \$1.1 billion deficit. And, let me remind you that at one time, the Graves budget surplus was \$750 million

What was it that Bill Graves said during his campaign? "Stack 'em high a tight?"

On January 15, 2003, before a joint session of the Kansas Legislature, the new Governor Kathleen Sebelius delivered her first state of the state message.

At the conclusion of her speech, this is what she said:

"Today's problems are the results of many different things. Some of it has been the slowing economy. Some of it has been past choices that were made. Whatever the cause, we got into this problem together, and we will get out of it together. There is no time for blame. There is no time for second-guessing. There is only time to look ahead and move forward together."

If you believe, as I believe, that our Governor is a visionary and consensus builder, then say it - Four More Years.

She entered office with a pledge to reform state government by cutting waste and promoting efficiency.

She has three times balanced the state budget without cuts to education or vital services and without raising taxes, while at the same time, giving our dedicated state employees a pay increase.

A review of state highway spending saved \$800 million without sacrificing any projects.

She saved the taxpayers another \$100 million by streamlining government.

When Governor Sebelius presented her budget to this year's legislative session the ending balance for FY 2007 is projected to be \$395 million.

If you believe, as I believe, that our Governor has shown what it is to be a fiscally responsible leader, then say it - Four More Years.

Under her leadership, the Kansas economy has grown, and the Kansas Department of Labor has reported 21 out of 23 months of job growth.

And, she put labor back into the Department of Labor.

Over the past several years, Kansas families and businesses have earned more income. In fact, for the past four months Kansas tax revenues have exceeded estimates by more than \$100 million.

The Governor believes, and the Democrats in the Legislature believe, it is an absolute truth that we cannot grow the economy without growing jobs.

The Governor believes, and we believe, it is an absolute truth that government cannot balance its budget if it doesn't help to balance the prosperity of its people.

And, the Governor believes, and we believe, that for those who work hard for a living wage the price of their employment shall not be an unsafe workplace, injury, or death at an earlier age.

If you believe, as I believe, that our Governor is a genuine champion of the working families of our state, then say it - For More Years.

When the Bush administration began another round of military base closings, Governor Sebelius was proactive in making certain that Kansas didn't get on the hit list.

She appointed a military advisory commission, chaired by our great Lt. Governor John Moore, to make our case of how important the military was to Kansas.

Those efforts paid off with the planned return of the Big Red One to Fort Riley, and the deployment of new units to McConnell Air Force Base, Forbes Field and Fort Leavenworth.

I vividly recall the front page headline in the Topeka Capital-Journal using a baseball metaphor, "Safe on All Bases."

More than 13,000 military and civilian jobs are expected to come to Kansas as a result.

Under her leadership, we have established a Military Bill of Rights and, for the first time, we are providing a life insurance benefit to the families of our National guardsmen who are killed in the line of duty.

If you believe, as I believe that our Governor and Lt. Governor have been strong advocates for our military, then say it - Four More Years.

In the area of health care, her record is truly remarkable.

The Governor implemented the I-Save RX program, which gives Kansans access to low-cost prescriptions from Canada and Europe, at a savings of 25 to 50%.

She has provided a safety net for seniors who are going through the confusing and frustrating maze of the Medicare prescription drug program.

She believes, and we believe, money should go to patient care, not paperwork, and is working to cut the administrative costs that eat up 30% of every health care dollar.

She has established, again with Lt. Governor Moore as its chairman, the Kansas Health Care Cost Containment Commission, to propose ways to reduce the cost of health care to our state's working families.

Under her leadership, a new Kansas Health Care Policy Authority has been created to find solutions for our ever-increasing Medicaid costs in the state budget.

Under her leadership, health insurance costs for our state employees are decreasing this year. In fact, for family health insurance, the state has increased its contribution from 35 to 45% and the employee's share has decreased by \$70 per month.

If you believe, as I believe, that our Governor and Lt. Governor are leading the fight on health care, then say it - Four More Years.

Governor Sebelius has fought, and will continue to fight, for adequate and equitable funding for Kansas public schools. The Governor believes, and we believe, in a real, long-term, sustainable solution to the school funding issue.

The Governor believes, and we believe, that one of our most important constitutional duties is for the Legislature to fund first-rate schools. By meeting our duty at the state level, we won't place an undue burden on local property taxpayers to fund schools.

And, to ensure that Kansas school children, and Kansas taxpayers, receive the best value

for their dollar, she initiated audits of local school districts.

The audits show what is being done right and what can be improved, so that more of every dollar goes into the classroom and Kansas taxpayers get their money's worth.

If you believe, as I believe, that our Governor has proven she is the Education Governor, then say it - Four More Years.

Kathleen Sebelius' vision and agenda for the future of Kansas has truly, as the theme for this weekend says, "returned hope to the heartland."

And, with the accomplishments she, and we, have achieved working together, it came as no surprise that Time magazine rated Kathleen Sebelius one of the five best Governors in the United States.

In her 2006 state of state message, she concluded with these words:

"We are blessed to live in Kansas, and to live here during a time of unprecedented opportunity.

"We've been through a valley. We now stand atop a hill, looking toward the horizon and all the promise it has to offer.

"We can continue our progress, but only if politics doesn't stand in the way. There will be plenty of time for campaigning later, so I ask you to join me in putting the people's hopes and dreams first."

To that I say, Governor Sebelius and Lt. Governor Moore, we are with you all the way - all the way through this session, this election year, and for Four More Years.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Rep. Saxton Announces \$40 Million Army Project for Fort Dix."** US Fed News (March 6).

Rep. Jim Saxton, R-N.J. (3rd CD), issued the following press release:

The first major project stemming from the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) proceedings was announced by Rep. Jim Saxton (NJ-3rd) today.

A \$40.7 million Army Reserve Center will be built within the next several years, using BRAC funds from the 2006 defense budget. Fort Dix missions will be a key part of the Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, and are expected to grow over the next six to 10 years to foster America's first Army-Air Force-Navy joint installation.

"This is the largest construction project I have ever seen on Fort Dix," Saxton said. "This is more than the last 10 projects combined. It solidifies Fort Dix as the Army Reserves' key installation on the East Coast and No. 1 power projection platform. More Reserve soldiers have been mobilized out of Dix than Fort Bragg."

Saxton said the facility will be home to up to 1,000 soldiers and civilians, and should be open in late 2007. The center will be made up of three buildings, including a main building of nearly 175,000 square feet.

"Ultimately, this project will consolidate Army Reserve missions around the country and make them more cost efficient," Saxton said. "In the end, it will save money."

Under the 2005 BRAC law, this project will house:

- * The assets of the Pittsburgh U.S. Army Reserve Center in Corapolis, Pa., by eliminating its Headquarters of the 99th Regional Readiness Command, and creating a new Northeast Regional Readiness Command Headquarters at Fort Dix;

- * The assets of Camp Kilmer in Edison, N.J. and transfer and relocate the Army Reserve's 78th Division Headquarters there to Fort Dix.

- *The components of the 77th Regional Readiness Command at Fort Totten, N.Y, and reform it as a Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at Fort Dix.

- * The 244th Aviation Brigade from Fort Sheridan, Ill.

Saxton, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, has helped obtain funds for past projects. The Third District he represents includes Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base, and formerly included Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station prior to redistricting in the 1990s.

Jeff Sagnip Hollendonner, 609/261-5801, www.house.gov/saxton.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Robey and Merdon to Join Efforts for BRAC Committee."** The Baltimore (MD) Sun (March 5): 21G.

County Executive James N. Robey and County Council Chairman Christopher J. Merdon have agreed to combine their efforts in creating a committee that will examine the effect of the thousands of government jobs heading to the region from the nationwide consolidation of military bases.

In January, the two announced plans to form similar committees that would analyze how the Base Closure and Realignment process would affect the county's schools, roads, housing and businesses. But Robey announced Friday that Merdon would be withdrawing his council resolution to form a committee.

In a statement, Merdon said: "The County Council looks forward to working with County Executive Robey on the formation of his task force as well as helping to address the impacts the BRAC recommendations will have on Howard County."

It is estimated that the BRAC process will bring 11,400 government jobs to Fort Meade, just over the Howard County line in Anne Arundel County, and to Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County.

The 25-member task force will be formed by executive order, and its members will be named by the end of the month, Robey's statement said.

Chris Cunningham. 2006. "**Enthusiasm for Airport Should Be Soaring.**" Augusta (GA) Chronicle (March 5): A5.

As an airport commissioner, I feel compelled to address several issues concerning the image and reputation of Augusta Regional Airport.

IT SEEMS as if airport-bashing has become a sport in the CSRA. Recently, I overheard a local businessman tell a group, "I fly to Pensacola every month and I don't even think about the Augusta Airport. It just isn't worth it." He is typical of many people who

are ignorant concerning the importance and value of our airport.

The airport and its tenants provide more than 560 jobs. The most recent economic impact studies reported that the airport contributes more than \$290 million annually to the local economy.

Thousands of military personnel use the airport annually, both commercially and militarily. Without the airport, we surely would have lost Fort Gordon during the Base Realignment and Closure cutbacks. It doesn't take an economic genius to figure out how devastating that would have been.

The new airport is being built with zero local tax dollars. The project is being built mainly with federal and state funds that would have gone to other communities. By the way, the \$30 million project is being done by a local contractor, using mostly local subcontractors. The remainder of the cost will be paid from airport revenues.

The airport is operated by a very dedicated, motivated and highly competent staff, most of whom could go to other airports and make more money. I have come to know many of these people on a personal basis, and they are all very sincere in their efforts to make the airport successful.

Airport Director Buster Boshears, Commission Chairman Cedric Johnson and Marketing Director Diane Johnson have worked tirelessly in their attempts to secure additional air service for Augusta. It is a top priority for the commission, and strategies are discussed at virtually every meeting. But, as everyone should know, these are very troubled times in the airline industry. One thing I can assure you is that, without the new terminal, we certainly will not attract any new service.

Augusta Regional had 17,027 general aviation operations in 2005. . Local businesses with aircraft based at the airport include Morris Communications, Hull-Storey Development, Club Car and Electrolux. These businesses, as well as other visitors, generate millions in revenue for the local economy.

I KNOW THAT the biggest problem people have with service in and out of Augusta is dependability of flights. The commission, as well as the airport staff, is well aware of this problem. The airport has no control over this situation. It is an airline problem. Bashing the airport in general is like throwing out the baby with the bath water. This is our community airport. We should support it in every way possible.

So, for those of you that think it is fun to bash the airport, please remember that you are doing a real disservice to your community. My grandmother, who was a very wise woman, always told me: If you don't have something nice to say, don't say anything at all.

(Editor's note: The writer has served on the Augusta Aviation Commission since 2002.)

Inga Miller. 2006. **"Army Plant Annexing in Riverbank's Future?"** The Modesto (CA) Bee (March 4): B1.

Some are Concerned About Cleanup of the 137-Acre Superfund

The city is preparing its first official move to annex the 137-acre Riverbank Army Ammunition Plant.

The City Council voted 3-0 Monday night to start the process, directing Community Development Director J.D. Hightower to prepare environmental documentation and detail the heavy industrial use that would be allowed on the land.

Federal officials decided last year to close the plant by 2011. The plant sits outside the city's eastern limit in Stanislaus County, but the city has eyed the site for an industrial park.

"The ultimate goal is to have this annexed so the local redevelopment authority will have control when the base closes," Hightower told the City Council.

He said if the city annexes the land, it will be in a position to negotiate its future. Federal officials plan to release an appraisal for the property May 9, according to Margaret Silveira, the city's housing and economic development director.

In May, federal officials are supposed to turn over a complete environmental picture of the plant's land and groundwater. It is on the federal Superfund list of polluted areas.

Earlier reports suggest work could be done as early as 2008, with monitoring lasting until 2023.

"The jurisdiction isn't my concern," Councilman Ric McGinnis said. "My concern is the responsibility. I want to make sure that as we go along in this process, we (make sure) that it remains with the federal government, because I don't want to undertake a Superfund cleanup site."

Hightower said that will not happen.

The cleanup, he said, will continue regardless of who owns the land.

Mayor Chris Crifasi and Councilwoman Kathy Anaya voted to move forward. Councilwomen Sandra Benitez and Virginia Madueño were absent.

If the annexation wins approval from the City Council, it will go to the regional commission that governs jurisdiction boundaries, the Stanislaus Local Agency Formation Commission.

Bee staff writer Inga Miller can be reached at 578-2382 or imiller@modbee.com.

Lolita C. Baldor. 2006. **"Commission to Review National Guard Role."** Associated Press Newswires (March 6, 23:35).

Thorny issues involving the changing role of the National Guard and Reserves and friction between federal and state officials over who controls the citizen soldiers must be addressed, members of a newly formed independent commission said Monday.

Members of the panel, many of them retired military, said they will begin rolling out initial recommendations by June. They cautioned, however, that state officials should not look to the commission to overturn unpopular base closure decisions approved by Congress last year.

Instead, the 13-member panel, chaired by retired Marine Corps Gen. Arnold L. Punaro, will do a yearlong review of how the nation should be using the National Guard and Reserves, and whether the units are properly trained and equipped for their changing roles on the home front and the front lines abroad.

Punaro said Monday that the panel is planning to release a preliminary report

around June 1, dealing with key issues -- including possible funding recommendations for re-equipping the Guard -- that Congress may be working on.

The commission, Punaro said, will look at "what are the threats, what are the requirements and where are the gaps." And, he said, the panel is not going to be reluctant to come out with recommendations that differ from those made within the Pentagon.

"We're not going to dodge any of the tough issues," he said.

Commissioners said that members of the Guard volunteered to join a reserve force that they believed would be mobilized occasionally for short periods of time. But the reserves have evolved into a force that made up nearly half of the U.S. combat troops in Iraq, doing day-to-day military operations in unprecedented tours abroad.

The most difficult questions requiring in-depth study will include whether Iraq deployments affected the response to Hurricane Katrina, whether Guard members are trained appropriately for homeland defense and combat missions, and when and if it is appropriate to federalize the Guard -- an issue that came up during Katrina's aftermath.

"It is one of the big, hairy unknowns -- what you do about that federal-state relationship," said panel member Rhett Dawson. "I'm not sure it's allocated in the smartest way today and whether the controls are right, but I'm not sure I can improve on it."

While state governors are commanders of their national guard for domestic emergencies, the president can, and has, called out reservists to deploy to Iraq and do

other federal military missions. A touchy issue during the hurricanes centered on whether Bush should have used a Civil War-era law to federalize the National Guard, enabling him to use those troops for law enforcement to quell looting and other problems.

The nation's governors, including Republican Gov. Dirk Kempthorne of Idaho, have already met with commission members to discuss their concerns about federal funding for the guard, including the need to replace equipment that was destroyed or left in Iraq.

Kempthorne told the panelists he is worried that Idaho's Guard units will not be as prepared for state disaster relief efforts in the event of forest fires or an earthquake because much of their equipment was left in Iraq, said his spokesman Michael Journee.

Lt. Gen. Steven H. Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, said recently that it will take about \$40 billion to re-equip the Guard over the next six years -- twice the \$21 billion that the Pentagon has proposed spending over that time.

Blum said that last year the Guard was providing up to 78,000 of the troops in Iraq, but that number will come down to about 50,000 this year.

Overall, the proposed 2007 budget would support a Guard of about 333,000 citizen soldiers -- the current level -- rather than the 350,000 authorized by Congress. It also proposes to pay for 188,000 Army Reserve troops rather than the 205,000 authorized by Congress.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Missouri's 131st to be First-Ever Guard Unit Selected for Elite B-2 Mission."** US Fed News (March 6).

The office of Sen. James Talent, R-Mo., issued the following press release:

Sen. Kit Bond and Rep. Ike Skelton, along with Sen. Jim Talent and Gov. Matt Blunt, today announced that the Air Force has selected the 131st Fighter Wing stationed at Lambert International Airport in St. Louis to join the elite B-2 mission at Whiteman Air Force Base.

Today's announcement means the 131st Fighter Wing's personnel will team up with the world's only B-2 long-range stealth bomber mission located at Whiteman Air Force Base. The move will pair the 131st's guard unit air crew, maintenance personnel and support staff with the current active-duty B-2 unit. The 131st was selected from Air Guard units across the country to support the B-2s.

"I am pleased that the U.S. Air Force found a way to preserve the 131st, one of the most experienced and proven Air Guard units in the country," said Senator Kit Bond. "To be chosen from Air Guard units across the country, this announcement is a real honor for the 131st."

"This B-2 Associate mission gives members of the Missouri Air National Guard an important new role, allowing them to continue to make critical contributions to our national security. I am very pleased that the Air Force recognized the importance of retaining these important skills here in Missouri," said Skelton. "This new Missouri Air National Guard unit will only add to Whiteman's reputation as one of the finest U.S.

military installations in the world. It is my continued desire that Whiteman Air Force Base be the premier air force base in the nation."

"This is tremendous news for the men and women of the 131st and for Missouri," said U.S. Senator Jim Talent, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "The Missouri delegation has worked together on a bipartisan basis and we are very pleased that the Air Force has selected our Fighter Wing as the only Air National Guard unit in the U.S. to fly the B-2 Stealth Bomber. This is a new chapter in the history of the 131st. I know they will maintain the standard of excellence for which they are known as they take on this new mission."

"As the Commander in Chief of the Missouri National Guard I am pleased that the Air Force selected the fine men and women of the 131st Fighter Wing to join forces with Whiteman Air Force Base," Blunt said.

"Protecting Missourians is one of my highest priorities as governor and this move will help defend our state from both foreign and domestic threats."

"Establishing an Air National Guard B-2 Associate mission is very exciting for the Missouri Air National Guard," said Maj. Gen. King Sidwell, Missouri National Guard adjutant general. "While the military is transforming to meet current and future objectives, we are prepared to do whatever necessary to remain an effective part of the total force."

The decision was made as part of Air Force's Total Force Integration Plan. In addition to preserving the 131st, one of the most experienced units in combat and flight hours, the news today will help ensure that the Air National Guard remains a part of the

total force as it participates in one of the Air Force's most elite and relevant missions.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Gov. Erlich Announces Funding for MD 175 Planning Study in Anne Arundel County."** US Fed News (March 6).

The Maryland Department of Transportation issued the following news release:

Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. today announced \$2.5 million for a planning study along MD 175 in central Anne Arundel County. This spring, the Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration (SHA) will identify potential improvements along MD 175 (Annapolis Road) between MD 295 (Baltimore Washington Parkway) and MD 170 (Telegraph Road), including a potential interchange along MD 175 at Reece Road.

This funding was added to the draft Consolidated Transportation Program submitted to the 2006 Legislature on January 18.

"Since taking office, my administration has authorized significant funding to improve transportation in Maryland," said Governor Ehrlich.

"This study of the MD 175 corridor is a continuation of my commitment to improve safety, reduce congestion and support economic growth in every county of the State."

In addition, the study will determine improvements needed along MD 175 near Fort Meade as a result of Department of Defense's 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) review. Fort Meade is

expected to see an increase of 5,000 jobs in the next few years, and an increase in traffic from the nearly 26,000 vehicles that currently travel the corridor.

David Buck and Chuck Gischlar, 410/545-0303, 800/323-6742, 800/735-2258, 410/209-5012.

Unattributed. 2006. "VA SJR 59, 2006-2007, Adopted." LegAlert (March 6).

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 59

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Rules on February 10, 2006)

(Patron Prior to Substitute -- Senator , Linda T. Puller) Requesting the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to conduct a study for improved public transportation services to Fort Belvoir in Fairfax County and the Marine Corps Base at Quantico in Prince William and Stafford Counties. Report.

WHEREAS, the U.S. Route 1 corridor in Northern Virginia, home to several large and vital military installations and numerous important commercial operations and major employment centers, is highly congested; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Transportation has studied the U.S. Route 1 corridor for the purpose of increasing its vehicular capacity and developing a bus rapid transit service; and

WHEREAS, current serious levels of congestion in the U.S. Route 1 corridor will

shortly be further exacerbated if the recommendations of the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) are fully implemented; and

WHEREAS, implementation of the BRAC recommendations would add 21,000 personnel to the U.S. Army garrison at Fort Belvoir in Fairfax County and add a further 5,000 personnel at the U.S. Marine Corps Base at Quantico in Prince William and Stafford Counties; and

WHEREAS, the funding of transit improvements should be a priority for the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, a long-term vision that includes transit-oriented economic development also is needed; and

WHEREAS, rapid transit can serve as a cost-effective and successful means of increasing travel capacity in this congested corridor; and

WHEREAS, it is important to maintain future options in the U.S. Route 1 corridor; and

WHEREAS, the study and development of a phased approach to highway, bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, and other transit options that encourages compact, transit-oriented development throughout the corridor would assist the Counties of Fairfax, Prince William and Stafford in their efforts to bring about pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use revitalization of U.S. Route 1; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Department of Rail and Public Transportation be requested to conduct a study for improved public transportation services to Fort Belvoir

in Fairfax County and the Marine Corps Base at Quantico in Prince William and Stafford Counties. The Department of Rail and Public Transportation shall conduct the study, in consultation with Fort Belvoir, Quantico Marine Corps Base, the Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission, the Virginia Railway Express, and the counties of Fairfax, Prince William, and Stafford. This study shall not be conducted unless funding is provided by appropriations available in the Appropriation Act to assist impacted localities in funding needs associated with the implementation of and response to the recommendations of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC).

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department of Rail and Public Transportation for this study, upon request.

The Department of Rail and Public Transportation shall complete its study by November 30, 2006, and shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports no later than the first day of the 2007 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

Edward Colimore. 2006. **"Fort Dix Lands \$40.7 Million Army Reserve Center."** The Philadelphia (PA) Inquirer

Its Staff Will Exceed 1,000, U.S. Rep. Jim Saxton Said, Calling It One Of The Base's Largest Building Projects

A \$40.7 million Army Reserve Center -- the first major project in the region to come out of a national reorganization of military bases -- will be built at Fort Dix within the next few years, U.S. Rep. Jim Saxton said yesterday.

Bids to build the center, where more than 1,000 soldiers and civilians will be employed, are expected to be solicited in June. A contract is likely to be awarded by August, followed by groundbreaking in November.

"This is the largest construction project I have ever seen on Fort Dix," said Saxton (R., N.J.), who learned of the Army's decision on the project a few days ago. "This is more than the last 10 projects combined.

"It solidifies Fort Dix as the Army Reserve's key installation on the East Coast."

Fort Dix joined McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station to form Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst after recommendations by the Base Closure and Realignment Commission. The megabase covers parts of Burlington and Ocean Counties.

Since 9/11, Dix has mobilized more reserve soldiers than Fort Bragg, N.C., said Saxton, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee whose district includes Dix and McGuire.

Its new reserve center will be made up of three buildings, including a main building of nearly 175,000 square feet.

"Ultimately, this project will consolidate Army Reserve missions around the country and make them more cost-efficient," Saxton said.

The center will house:

The assets of the Pittsburgh Army Reserve Center in Coraopolis, Pa., and create a Northeast Regional Readiness Command Headquarters at Fort Dix.

The assets of Camp Kilmer in Edison, N.J., and move the Army Reserve's 78th Division Headquarters there to Dix.

The components of the 77th Regional Readiness Command from Fort Totten, N.Y., and transform it into a Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at Dix.

The 244th Aviation Brigade from Fort Sheridan, Ill.

Hundreds of millions of dollars are likely to be spent in the next decade on construction at the megabase, Saxton said.

Facilities to handle the new units and equipment will cost at least \$108 million, according to Base Closure and Realignment Commission estimates. Dix will get 1,050 additional jobs and McGuire 779 jobs out of the recent base realignment actions. Forty-seven aircraft also will be relocated to the megabase.

What's more, the Department of Defense's Future Years Defense Plan calls for more than \$150 million in construction at the joint base.

Contact staff writer Edward Colimore at 856-779-3833 or ecolimore@phillynews.com. To comment,

or to ask a question, go to <http://go.philly.com/askcolimore>.

Unattributed. 2006. "**IL HB 4303, 2005-2006.**" LegAlert (March 7).

Amends the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act and the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act to provide that areas designated as Enterprise Zones under the Illinois Enterprise Zone Act that are located on a former U.S. military base that was closed in 1990 or thereafter are exempt from the provisions, duties, obligations, and penalties provided under these Acts. Effective immediately.

20051221 - (H) FILED WITH THE CLERK BY REP. JIM SACIA

20060104 - (H) FIRST READING

20060104 - (H) REFERRED TO RULES COMMITTEE

20060131 - (H) ASSIGNED TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

20060215 - (H) DO PASS / SHORT DEBATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE; 011-000-000

20060215 - (H) PLACED ON CALENDAR 2ND READING - SHORT DEBATE

20060228 - (H) SECOND READING - SHORT DEBATE

20060228 - (H) HELD ON CALENDAR ORDER OF SECOND READING - SHORT DEBATE

20060303 - (H) RULE 19(A) / RE-REFERRED TO RULES COMMITTEE

Michael Rothfeld. 2006. **"Suozzi's Uphill Fight in His Bid to Become Democratic Nominee for Governor, He is Far Behind Spitzer, Even in Nassau, Poll Shows."** Newsday (Nassau, NY) (March 7): A5.

A week after Nassau County Executive Thomas Suozzi declared his campaign for governor, even Democrats in his home county strongly prefer Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, a Newsday/NY1 News poll has found.

Suozzi would lose to Spitzer 51 percent to 29 percent in Nassau alone, despite his resounding re-election in November, and 60 percent to 14 percent in Suffolk County. In Suffolk, 58 percent said they need more information about him. Across the state, 82 percent of voters said they don't know enough about Suozzi to offer an opinion of him.

That illustrates the rough road the county executive faces and the many millions of dollars he'll probably have to spend to compete in the September primary, experts say.

"The biggest problem here is name recognition, but that can't be a problem in Nassau where they know him," said Norman Adler, a Manhattan political consultant. "If his performance in his base is close to pitiful, it robs him of the opportunity to say, 'When the rest of the state gets to know me, they'll like me.'"

The poll, by Blum & Weprin, shows Spitzer with a commanding lead over any challenger, Republican or Democrat, at this early stage, with job approval ratings of 69

percent after prosecuting corruption on Wall Street and in other sectors.

Democrats hope to take state government back as Republican Gov. George Pataki departs and mulls a presidential bid with 50 percent approval ratings, the poll found. Pataki's disapproval rating was 40 percent. A Pataki spokesman declined to comment on the numbers.

If a primary were held today, Spitzer would dispatch Suozzi among state Democrats, 60 percent to 9 percent, the poll shows. Jay Jacobs, Suozzi's campaign chairman, noted that he entered the race only a week ago. He predicted the polls will "change dramatically" as the race unfolds and Spitzer's air of invincibility fades.

"The conventional wisdom is that Spitzer is unbeatable, he will be the nominee, and Suozzi is just not going to be able to do it," Jacobs said. "People respond to that, and they like to position themselves with the person they think is going to win."

Spitzer would rout either of two Republicans in a November general election, the survey indicates. He'd beat former Massachusetts governor William Weld, 57 percent to 16 percent, and former state assembly minority leader John Faso, 56 percent to 16 percent. The poll shows voters aren't tuned in to the Republican primary: 70 percent of enrolled party members said they are not sure whom to pick. The highest number, 8 percent, chose Weld.

The Weld and Faso campaigns said early results are meaningless because the races haven't heated up yet. "The only poll that matters happens on Nov. 7," Weld spokeswoman Andrea Tantaros said. Spitzer's campaign declined to comment.

The poll also exposes another potential problem for Suozzi, who is courting moderate Democrats, though liberals generally vote in primaries.

His approval rating on Long Island among Democrats was 59 percent, not much better than his 52 percent from Republicans. Suozzi last month unveiled a county program to bring together abortion-rights supporters and opponents.

"I don't like Suozzi's opinions on abortion," said Harold Jacobson, 82, a Democrat and former dentist from Plainview who picked Spitzer in the poll. Jacobson said working with abortion-rights foes stigmatizes women who seek abortions.

Suozzi also hopes to convince voters that as an executive of a county he is better suited than Spitzer, a prosecutor, to be governor. But respondents said the job of state attorney general is the better preparation, 56 percent to 18 percent.

"He's decisive," Charles Donner, 68, a Democrat in suburban Rochester, said of Spitzer, whom he chose in the poll. "He's not afraid to take some action." Donner said he'd keep his mind open to Suozzi.

Joel Benenson, a Democratic political consultant, said surmounting Spitzer's lead is "not an easy task." "If you're Tom Suozzi, what you have to do is a lot of hard work that Spitzer's been doing for eight years ... and find creative ways to make news," Benenson said. "Suozzi hasn't done that yet."

Their Choice for Governor

A Newsday/NY1 poll of registered state voters asked whom they would vote for if the gubernatorial elections were held today.

Democratic primary

(Asked of registered Democrats)

Thomas Suozzi 9%

Eliot Spitzer 60%

Other/Unsure/would not vote 32%

Republican primary

(Asked of registered Republicans)

John Faso 6%

William Weld 8%

Patrick Manning 3%

Randy Daniels 3%

Other/Unsure/would not vote 80%

General election

Spitzer vs. Faso

Faso 16%

Spitzer 56%

Other/Unsure/Would not vote 28%

General Election

Spitzer vs. Weld

Weld 16%

Spitzer 57%

Other/Unsure/would not vote 25%

NOTE: Poll of 1,457 registered state voters was conducted by Blum & Weprin Feb. 16 through March 5. Within the sample were 638 registered Democrats, 411 registered Republicans 441 Long Island voters and 496 New York City voters. Margins of error are +/-4% (Democrats) +/-5% (Republicans) Some figures do not add up to 100% because of rounding.

Steve Herman. 2006. "Okinawans Rally in Opposition to U.S. Military Bases. US Fed News (March 5).

The Voice of America issued the following story:

Okinawans on Sunday expressed their feelings about the U.S. military presence here through music, rather than marches.

After singing two anti-war songs, the veteran activist musician-politician Shokichi Kina, who represents Okinawa in the Upper House of Parliament, again took the stage to criticize both Washington and Tokyo for their failure to remove the U.S. military presence from the island.

Kina, of the opposition Democratic Party, says it is time for Okinawa to once again be independent of Japan.

Okinawa was once known as the independent Ryukyu kingdom. After centuries of prosperity, it came under Japanese control in 1872 and passed into American hands at the end of World War II. The United States returned Okinawa to Japan in 1972.

Okinawans complain their wishes are being ignored. Okinawa makes up less than one percent of Japan's land mass but hosts the bulk of the U.S. forces in Japan - both in size and number of personnel.

There are some 25,000 American military personnel assigned to Okinawa at numerous Marine camps, Naval bases and smaller facilities as part of the U.S. commitment of a bilateral alliance to defend Japan.

Okinawans want U.S. military personnel to leave, citing crimes committed by U.S. troops, aircraft noise and the potential danger from crashes of helicopters and jets.

The military presence has long been a sensitive subject on Okinawa, where one in three civilians perished in World War II, many caught in the crossfire between the American and Japanese armies.

Speaking at Sunday's rally, a former Okinawa city bureaucrat, Teruko Kuwae, demanded that the central Japanese government pay more attention to the requests of residents.

Kuwae says Japan is slavish in paying heed to the desires of President Bush and the United States, but it is harsh when it comes to its treatment of Okinawa.

U.S. and Japanese officials say they will announce at the end of this month that some seven thousand U.S. Marines will move from Okinawa to Guam, an American island territory in the western Pacific. But Okinawans complain that falls far short of the type of significant reduction they have long demanded.

Organizers of Sunday's rally say 35,000 people attended. The number appeared to be far short of that despite the fine weather and far lower than had been expected. That could be a sign that Japan's central government will face less resistance to the base realignment plan from the public than

some Okinawan politicians and activists predict.

Staff. 2006. **"Ready or Not, Here They Come!"** Northwest Florida Daily News (Fort Walton Beach, FL) (March 5).

Since the BRAC boom became known, Air Force officials and local planners have warned that more roads will be needed to keep Okaloosa County's population moving. Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Riemer, the Air Armament Center's new commander, was pressing the issue again last month. "The roads, the infrastructure, the water, sewage treatment, you name it ... our infrastructure needs to be sized to keep pace with that growth," Maj. Gen. Riemer said at a breakfast sponsored by Okaloosa's Economic Development Council. If you'll pardon the analogy, the general and other forward-thinking officials have a bumpy road ahead. It's not just that securing funds for road widening, road building and other transportation improvements will be difficult. The real problem is that a great many area residents, and a great many politicians whose ears they bend, resist almost any kind of road work.

Witness the long, loud and bitter fight over whether to build another bridge from Fort Walton Beach to Okaloosa Island. County officials say their file cabinets bulge with plans for road work -- bridges, bypasses, overpasses, traffic circles -- that were studied, debated and then abandoned because of public opposition. Some of this work is opposed because the new road, bypass or whatever would encroach on state or federal land, which certain folks believe should be forever offlimits to asphalt. Some of it is opposed because the road work would impact an existing neighborhood.

There would be more traffic. Homes might have to be relocated. And some of it is opposed simply because residents think more roads will bring more people, and they don't want more people. A reader gave voice to this fear in our Feb. 19 "Spout Off" column: "Improving roads and building bridges and condos only entices more people. Remember, 'If you build it, they will come.' " Here's the catch: They're coming anyway. The base realignment process will bring at least 12,000 new residents, perhaps as many as 20,000, to Okaloosa County over the next five years. And that's on top of this area's normal growth and each summer's surge of tourists. They're coming whether our roads and water systems are ready or not. We know that some folks draw an odd distinction: Government growth is OK but private-sector growth isn't. But even that line is blurring. Check out a reader's complaint from last week: "How could anybody oppose building a new bridge and new roads when they should be opposing the thousands of new military personnel who are coming?" Sorry, but it looks as if "opposing the thousands of new military personnel" will be like opposing the sunrise. Same goes for tourism, new births, non-military jobs and the myriad other factors that boost our population. Growth happens. Sometimes, a lot of it happens quickly. It's best to be ready.

Susan McDonough. **"Oak Knoll Neighbors Chime In."** The Oakland (CA) Tribune (March 4).

Neighbors have been kept off much of the grounds of the Oak Knoll Naval Hospital in the southern Oakland hills since the U.S. Navy abandoned the property in 1996.

But with the locks coming off and developers with mysterious, multimillion-dollar plans moving in, one thing is certain: Plenty of people have plenty to say about what is done with the shady, 167-acre property with sweeping views of San Francisco Bay.

Developer SunCal Cos. met with neighbors in the Oakland hills Thursday during the first of three public meetings planned to discuss redevelopment of the land, closed in 1993 during one of the first rounds of federal base closures nationwide.

The 6 p.m. meeting was at capacity; organizers had to ask stragglers to wait outside the Oakland Zoo Snow building until wiggle room opened up inside.

Neighbors from both sides of Interstate 580 listened while developers talked about the history and layout of the property, which fell through several hands before SunCal purchased it for \$100.5 million in November.

"This is not going to be a project. It's not going to be a housing subdivision. It's going to be a community," Peter Calthrope, a well-known urban planner hired by SunCal to design Oak Knoll, told the group of more than 200 people.

Calthrope said he was not going to pretend the company did not have its own ideas for the property, but he promised to listen to neighbors' suggestions.

"They want to be heard, and we want to hear them," Pat Keliher, project manager for the Oak Knoll site, said later in an interview.

Calthrope promised that neighborhoods would be built for people, not automobiles. As examples, he showed slides of other

projects with garages in the rear and houses built around grassy courtyards instead of paved cul-de-sacs.

The master plan would respect the character of the land cut with creeks and steep hillsides. Builders would not come in and level things, he said.

And there would be a range of house styles, from lower-priced bungalows to expensive, live-work spaces, as well as affordable housing.

For the most part, neighbors seemed to like what they heard, and they gave SunCal high marks for its public planning process.

"The proof will be in the pudding to see if our input is actually adopted," said Mark White, a local homeowner.

Neighbors told developers they want Rifle Range Creek, which the Navy built over in spots, restored. They want open spaces and walking trails with "pooper-scooper stations," a village center with specialty shops, a public library, a sports field and schools.

"No big-box stores," and "no rental units" were popular sentiments expressed by the group.

Barbara Bray, who has lived in the Sequoyah Hills Oak Knoll neighborhood for 30 years, said she would like to see a Cold Stone Creamery on the property.

When people shouted out "Emeryville" and "Berkeley" as suggested locations, she said, "I want to shop in Oakland," and people applauded.

Bray said neighbors are leery of developers who in the past have proposed a gambling

casino, a homeless shelter and a golf course
* things they considered inappropriate * for
the land.

"It took a long time and didn't work," she
said.

The city of Oakland originally offered the
Navy \$2 million for the land and increased
its offer to \$11 million in 2002, which the
Navy rejected.

In an auction later, St. Paul Baptist Church
of Oakland placed a winning bid of

\$22.5 million for the property. The church
struggled to come up with the initial \$2.25
million down payment and failed to pay the
rest of the tab by deadline, so it lost its claim
to the property.

The property has sat empty for so long, Bray
said, she is happy somebody is finally
moving in.

SunCal, she said, "seems honorable."

SunCal expects to present a preliminary plan
for the property based on neighbors'
comments at a second public meeting
scheduled for late March.

Staff. **"Anteon Providing ONR Program
Management Services."** Aerospace Daily
& Defense Report 217/41 (March 3): 4.

The U.S. Navy has chosen Anteon
International Corp. for a \$15.8 million, five-
year contract to support the Office of Naval
Research's Marine Corps science and
technology programs, the company said Feb.
28.

The award from ONR's department for
Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare and
Combating Terrorism and the Office of the
Vice Chief of Naval Research calls for
Anteon to provide program management,
engineering, and analytical and financial
management services focusing on C4ISR,
mine countermeasures, logistics, human
performance, training, survivability,
maneuver and firepower.

Fairfax, Va.-based Anteon will provide its
services to the department at its offices in
Arlington, Va. ONR and other defense
research agencies recently were kept in
Arlington after the Bush administration
recommended consolidating them as part of
the 2005 base closure and realignment
process (DAILY, Aug. 29, 2005).

Chris Collins. 2006. **"Airport Gets Boose
From Supervisors."** The Modesto (CA)
Bee (March 3): B1.

Merced County OKs Redevelopment Plan for
Castle's Airfield

With no fanfare and zero comment from the
public, a massive redevelopment plan for
Castle Airport was approved after months of
delays.

Mike Nelson, chairman of the Merced
County Board of Supervisors, put it all in
perspective.

"Congratulations, Mr. Fowler, you're
finally making some progress," he told John
Fowler, head of the Commerce, Avia- tion
and Economic Development Department,
after the unanimous vote Tuesday.

The 30-year plan is based on a 1996 report
that suggests Castle be used primarily as a

"major aircraft maintenance facility and aircraft maintenance training center."

It aims to transform 1,700 acres of the old Air Force base into an educational, industrial and commercial hot zone.

The plan would spruce up the airstrip, which is the fourth-largest in the state and try to attract more air traffic.

The board's OK puts the county in a better position to acquire the airport, which still is owned by the Air Force. It will siphon thousands of tax dollars each year toward revitalization efforts, said Castle Redevelopment Coordinator Tracy Pisacco.

Though the county will get less than \$20,000 this year to invest in Castle, it will receive bigger chunks of property taxes in the future as more people buy and lease buildings and land at Castle, she said.

The county has the option of using those funds to take out up to \$1.1 billion in loans, though Pisacco said it's unlikely the county would borrow that much money.

Fowler said the plan gives the county a tool "so we can get on with fixing what we need to fix."

He cautioned, however, that it would be about seven or eight years before any significant improvements are made. He said he wasn't sure where the first big changes would occur.

"It's aviation, it's commercial, it's industrial, it's educational," he said. "You never know which one we will need to assist first."

When Nelson was asked whether he thought the county would take out any loans to help

redevelopment, he said: "I'm not a fortuneteller."

In the next five years, the county probably will have to spend more than \$300,000 on reviving Castle's airport facilities, according to a consultant's report released last year.

The report suggests that the county should put money toward incentive programs for potential investors and spend money on cleaning up environmental problems.

A vote on the revitalization effort stalled last year when the county failed to adequately publicize a public hearing.

A hearing and vote on the plan was rescheduled to late January, but a letter arrived at the last second objecting to the plan and delayed the vote.

Nelson said the setbacks slowed the process but were not a "major impediment."

Since the base closed in 1995, about 60 structures at Castle have been demolished. Of the 125 remaining, 50 or so are slated for destruction.

Fowler wants to tear down many of the half-century-old buildings because they are moldy or in disrepair.

The county has attracted two flight schools and a handful of businesses to the airport.

Fowler said he has received "very steady interest" from businesses that want to use the land, though he wouldn't say which companies are looking at Castle.

David Klement. 2006. "**Life After Katrina.**" The Bradenton (FLL) Herald (March 6): 15.

The levees failed - massively. But nobody told New Orleans, and a city slowly, agonizingly drowned.

It was a "perfect storm" of nature. Sadly for New Orleans residents, it was matched with a "perfect storm" of human incomprehension.

It took three full days for the "bowl" that is New Orleans to fill up. As it did, more than 1,000 people died. The world watched in shock as thousands more were plucked from rooftops and balconies by brave Coast Guard helicopter crews. Countless "luckier" ones sweltered in the fetid ruins of the Superdome. Meanwhile, state and local officials begged for help, FEMA officials preened and dithered, and the White House went about business as usual.

Why the levees failed, and why residents were left in the dark for almost 24 hours, are questions which no one in a responsible position seems able to answer with certainty. But in that tragedy is a lesson that every state and town vulnerable to hurricanes ought to heed. It is not a stretch to say that Manatee County, with Tampa Bay, Sarasota Bay, the Manatee River and Braden River hemming in huge population centers on three sides, could be as vulnerable to a devastating storm surge as New Orleans. Or even more so: The New Orleans area is ringed by 350 miles of levees, while Manatee County's only protections are two barrier islands and puny seawalls here and there. There is almost nothing to protect Manatee County's miles of shoreline from hurricane-driven floodwaters should a

Katrina-force storm come ashore on Tampa Bay.

But as New Orleans learned, to its dismay, a 20-foot storm surge is tough for any man-made structure to tame.

A four-day tour of the Katrina damage zone arranged by the National Conference of Editorial Writers made clear that the levees' failure was perhaps the greatest tragedy of the entire Katrina disaster. Had they held, the city would have sustained considerable flood damage, especially in vulnerable areas like the Lower Ninth Ward. But there would not have been people drowning in their attics and bodies floating in the water, dramatic rooftop rescues and 80 percent of the city festering in floodwaters for 10 days. The fact is that New Orleans survived Katrina in relatively good shape, being on the weaker, western side of the eye, while the border area of Louisiana and Mississippi bore the full force of her 145-mph winds. Many New Orleans residents went to bed the night of Aug. 29 thinking they had dodged a bullet; a few at the Louisiana State University Hurricane Center in Baton Rouge even cracked open a bottle of good Pinot grigio to toast that fact.

But unknown to most residents, city officials, emergency responders and even the Corps of Engineers, a disaster was in the making within two hours of Katrina's landfall at 6:10 a.m. that Monday. The Industrial Canal breached, sending water surging through the Lower Ninth Ward, one of the city's lowest neighborhoods. Maj. Gen. Hunt Downer, on duty in his Louisiana National Guard office at Jackson Barracks two miles from the canal, watched whitecaps rolling down the street as he talked to his wife on the telephone around 8 a.m. Before long he was watching his car and every other vehicle in the parking lot

float down the street. By 9:30 a.m. the historic base, close to where Gen. Andy Jackson fought the bloody British in the Battle of New Orleans in 1814-15, was under 8 to 10 feet of water. Swamped in that deluge was the base's military museum, whose collection of 350 military weapons included muskets from pre-colonial times, and 13 ante-bellum homes that housed senior Guard staff.

People knew the levees had broken. At the LSU Center, Professor Ivor van Heerden, a hurricane modeling expert who had warned as early as 10 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 27, that "New Orleans will flood," had a report from the National Weather Service as early as 8:14 a.m. Monday that a canal had failed. A White House account of events put that warning at 9:12 a.m. More convincingly Van Heerden, who was given extensive TV time analyzing what went wrong in the days after the storm, has an aerial photo taken by a FEMA photographer at 2 p.m. Monday. It shows a 400-foot section of the Industrial Canal pushed 35 feet inland. Doubtless this was the source of the flood that sent Gen. Downer's troops into full rescue mode and Lower Ninth Ward residents in search of higher ground.

Van Heerden knew this amounted to "catastrophic failure" of the levee system. But people in responsible positions on the ground apparently did not - or if they did, they failed to comprehend what it meant.

Communications lines were disintegrating as Katrina stormed. But, says Van Heerden, people knew. "The state told FEMA. FEMA told (Director Michael) Brown. Brown told the White House. . . And it didn't get anywhere."

Indeed, videotapes of White House briefings released just last week showed repeated warnings before Katrina struck that the

levees could break, putting lives at risk. As New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin said in retrospect, "You know, from this tape it looks like everybody was fully aware."

President Bush appeared not to be. Even four days after the storm, he told the nation: "I don't think anybody anticipated the breach of the levees."

The truth is they did - but they didn't.

The levees were designed to withstand a Category 2 hurricane - winds of 96- to 110-mph, but Katrina was a Category 4 at landfall, around 145 mph. The difference in storm surge between those two rankings is 6 to 8 feet for Category 2, vs. 13 to 18 feet for Category 4. That alone might help explain the failure of some levees. But several engineers and on-the-scene officials estimate Katrina's actual surge in the Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes at 20 feet - a massive wall of water that even levees built to Category 5 standards probably could not have withstood.

And hurricanes don't follow the precise patterns that human minds have laid out in an effort to quantify them. Wind speed is just one factor.

The dimensions of the eye and of its circular windband, the forward speed and the barometric pressure all factor into the impact of a storm when it hits land. Katrina was massively wide - 200 miles, with a 25-mile eye - and slow-moving. Thus the towering storm surge, driven from the Gulf over marshlands that had been destroyed by decades of human mismanagement, was the equivalent of a tsunami, overwhelming locks and levees designed for a much smaller event.

Van Heerden had designed computer models of such storms - the "Hurricane Pam"

exercise in '04 was one - which predicted the city would flood. But much as intelligence officials couldn't grasp the concept of suicidal terrorists hijacking loaded airliners and flying them into skyscrapers before 9/11, apparently no one thought Nature would throw something like that at New Orleans. They knew it would flood if it did. And they knew the canals, the Mississippi and its man-made extension called the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet act as a massive funnel through which flood waters could pour into the city under the right conditions.

Katrina was a "perfect storm" for the lack of vision by federal, state and local officials.

James O. Ward Jr., deputy director of the Army Corps teams working to repair some 60 levee breaches in the New Orleans area, called Katrina a 200-year storm.

"The canals should have stood up to the event they got, but they did not," he told editorialists from around the country. Why? "I'm not sure.

Obviously, something went badly wrong. It could be the design, the height or the construction." Added Lt. Col. David Berczek, also of the Corps, "In some cases, it (a levee) was simply overwhelmed."

There is debate over whether the levees were properly designed and constructed. Van Heerden questions whether the Corps engineers' calculations are accurate, charging they miscalculated the levees' strength by a factor of two to three. He contends the soil that forms the levees contains too much organic matter and sand and not enough clay to form a strong bond. Moreover, he believes the concrete walls that top the canal levees throughout the city are poorly designed and not driven into the bottom to the design depth of 26 feet.

Instead of a T-design with braces angled out on both sides of the lower portion of the wall to add strength, the walls are a simple I design - basically a wall of steel and concrete dominos sunk to as little as 10 feet that the right amount of water could push over and/or top. That, he insists, explains the 400-foot section of the Industrial pushed aside like a child's block.

Corps crews are working feverishly to repair the levees in time for the next hurricane season which officially starts June 1. Berczek said the agency is working at 59 locations under contracts worth \$770 million.

Some will simply be restored to their pre-K condition; others will be improved with T-wall design. As for the long-term future, he said the Corps is involved in a study of what it would take to harden the entire levee system to withstand a Category 5 storm. That report isn't expected until fall 2007.

What is done with that ultimately will depend upon Congress. Just as previous Congresses refused to fund previous Corps' plans for Category 5 levees, this could become just another study gathering dust on a shelf.

And elected officials will scratch their heads and point fingers the next time New Orleans floods.

And here, in hurricane-prone Southwest Florida, we sit even more vulnerable.

Sam Hanel. 2006. "St. Louis Air Guard Unit Moving to Whiteman Air Force Base." Associated Press Newswires (March 6, 10:34).

A St. Louis Air National Guard unit originally slated for closure will instead

relocate to Whiteman Air Force Base near Sedalia, Mo., sparing about 250 jobs, Missouri lawmakers said Monday.

The move is a glimmer of good news for Missouri, which lost about 3,000 defense-related jobs in the federal base closure and realignment process last year.

Members of the 131st Fighter Wing, now based at Lambert Airport, will team up with current active-duty personnel at Whiteman to support the B-2 stealth bomber mission.

"I am pleased that the U.S. Air Force found a way to preserve the 131st, one of the most experienced and proven Air Guard units in the country," Sen. Kit Bond, R-Mo., said in a written statement.

U.S. Air Force officials considered guard units from around the nation before selecting the 131st, Bond said. The fighter wing will be the only Air Guard unit in the country to fly the B-2.

Missouri officials launched a major effort last year to stop the Defense Department from moving the National Guard's 15 fighter jets from Lambert to other bases around the country. Bond and the state's other federal lawmakers claimed it would jeopardize national security by leaving the region without adequate air defenses.

But the federal Base Closing and Realignment Commission agreed with the Pentagon and the decision was later approved in Congress, along with plans to close dozens of military installations and Guard units across the country. The state also lost a federal lawsuit that claimed Guard units could not be moved without the consent of the governor.

Sen. Jim Talent, R-Mo., said the state's congressional delegation worked together in lobbying the Air Force to make the decision.

"I know they will maintain the standard of excellence for which they are known as they take on this new mission," Talent said.

Rep. Ike Skelton, a Missouri Democrat whose district includes Whiteman, said the new unit would help the base become one of the premier Air Force posts in the nation.

Gov. Matt Blunt, a Republican, said the move would "help defend our state from both foreign and domestic threats."

It was not immediately known when the transfer would take place.

The base at Lambert would remain open under the Pentagon's realignment plan. The 157th Air Operations Group and the 218th Engineering Installation Group will relocate from Jefferson Barracks into space at Lambert.

Maj. Gen. King Sidwell, adjutant general for the Missouri National Guard, called the news an exciting development.

"While the military is transforming to meet current and future objectives, we are prepared to do whatever necessary to remain an effective part of total force," Sidwell said.

Mikhail Moshkin. 2006. **"The Last Russian Troops Will Leave Georgia in 2008."** WPS: Defense & Security (March 6).

We have obtained a copy of the military bases withdrawal agreements with Georgia, written by the Russian Defense Ministry.

Since President Saakashvili has not insisted on immediate withdrawal of the Russian military for some time, Tbilisi must have found the terms proposed by Moscow quite acceptable.

We have obtained a copy of the military bases withdrawal agreements with Georgia, written by the Russian Defense Ministry. Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov has a week to sign the documents before forwarding them to President Putin. Since President Mikhail Saakashvili of Georgia has not insisted on immediate withdrawal of the Russian military for some time, official Tbilisi must have found the terms proposed by Moscow quite acceptable.

The signing of the agreements will put the Russian bases in Batumi and Akhalkalaki in the "withdrawal mode." The 62nd Base in Akhalkalaki is the first to be pulled out. Evacuation of military hardware is to be completed by the end of 2006. The base itself is to be closed not later than December 31, 2007.

It will be the turn of the 6th Base in Batumi then. Withdrawal of the base and headquarters of the Russian Army Group in the Caucasus is scheduled for 2008. The assets will be divided by the principle "we get whatever can be moved and leave you the rest."

The compromise that may result in the Russian-Georgian agreements was reached within the last twelve months. Some experts evaluate the agreements as a concession to Georgia.

"You know, the logic of the Russian side escapes me entirely," said Constantine Stalin, CIS Countries Institute director and Duma member.

"When the Georgian leadership is making arrangements for using its army against South Ossetia and Abkhazia, addressing the matter of withdrawal is the height of political folly. If there is anyone in the Foreign Ministry or Defense Ministry who believes that after signing the agreements Georgia will relax pressure on Abkhazia and South Ossetia, they are in for a nasty surprise."

Some articles of the agreements are indeed dubious. Given the desire and ingenuity, official Tbilisi may apply clauses of the documents to peacekeepers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. On the other hand, it is clear to everyone that peacekeepers' presence in the conflict areas is subject of absolutely different agreements and there is nothing to be done about it without the consent of all involved parties: Georgia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. It means that Georgia is highly unlikely to have Russian peacekeepers ousted on the basis of the agreements in question. Russia will retain its contingents in the breakaway provinces - a powerful policy instrument in the Caucasus.

Translated by A. Ignatkin

Gazeta, March 3, 2006, p. 5

Robert D. Eldridge. 2006. **"12 Major Reasons Why Henoko Option is Flawed."** Daily Yomiuri (March 6): 10.

It is time for the Defense Agency to admit its plan to relocate the functions of U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station to Henoko is flawed and to look at a new plan that creates a win-win-win situation for all three parties--the United States, Japan and Okinawa Prefecture. The failure to do so

now could fatally damage the alliance and make any future modus vivendi with Okinawa Prefecture more difficult.

With the exception of a few officials in the agency and Liberal Democratic Party, no one is satisfied with the current Henoko option found in the October 29 Interim Report. Nor was the Nago light option or the more shortsighted Camp Schwab option any better. Even the 1996 Special Action Committee on Okinawa agreement had to be ruled out by both the Japanese and U.S. governments due to environmental concerns, unsound construction methods, mounting fiscal problems and unresolved political issues.

Specifically, there are at least 12 major problems with the current Henoko plan. First, the construction of new airfield across the Schwab Peninsula will cause significant environmental damage to the coral areas around the peninsula and to Oura Bay to the northwest, not to mention impact the feeding areas of the dugong, the symbol of the environmental movement.

Second, the flight patterns would be noisy and potentially dangerous for nearby residents. Despite the agency's statements to the contrary, the runway needs to be at least 2,000 meters from neighboring homes in order to avoid these concerns. In the current plan, however, the flights would be only 700 meters from the Henoko district in Nago and less than 500 meters from other communities.

These concerns have also bothered the U.S. military. The Marine Corps realizes the inconvenience its flights causes for the citizens of Okinawa and does not want to trouble them any more than necessary when carrying out its alliance obligations; hence its agreement 10 years ago to move to what

was then, prior to economic stimulus packages, a less populated area. For this reason, the current plan is unsound because a new urban area is already developing near the planned facility and a second "Futenma Problem" will simply emerge in the future.

The fourth problem is with its military aspects. Negotiated by civilians rather than military specialists, the Henoko plan does not maintain the current capabilities of Futenma. Most egregious is the greatly shortened runway, which at about 1800 meters (including overruns) does not replicate the 2800-meter runway of Futenma.

A related fifth problem is the fact that the Henoko plan focuses only on the airfield and does not specify where, when, and how the related support facilities, such as housing, schools, etc., would be built in an increasingly crowded area around the small community of Henoko. Due to the move north, military personnel living in housing areas in the southern and central part of Okinawa will have to make a long daily commute to Henoko, in some cases, 90-minute one-way drives. When I explained this to an otherwise thoughtful Japanese scholar of U.S.-Japan relations last year, he responded, "They are civil servants and thus just have to put up with it." Unfortunately, it does not work that way.

Military personnel need to be fully attentive and in their best health to perform the missions assigned to them. They are not sitting behind desks like us academics, but behind steering wheels and in some cases in the cockpits. Furthermore, with the bases spread out as they are, inter-base transportation and shipment of supplies will have to continue on the public roadways, this time requiring even more travel as the facility would be moved further north.

The sixth problem relates to the fact that Henoko is not a comprehensive solution. Not only are the support facilities not included, but no specific plan exists for the other bases that need to be consolidated and relocated, such as Naha Military Port, Camp Kinser, Self-Defense Forces facilities, and other bases. As a result, these problems are just being put off for a later day.

Seventh is in the construction. Fill will need to be shipped from China, which will increase the time and costs involved. A breakwater will also need to be constructed, as Okinawa is known as Typhoon Ginza. Such a wall misleadingly does not appear in any of the agency designs. Construction of it will add to the costs and time involved, not to mention increased opposition by environmental groups.

The eighth problem relates to the fact that four historical sites are located in the planned construction area. The sites would need to be investigated, expected to take at least 6-1/2 years, before construction begins.

The ninth problem is the time involved. In light of the above problems, the Henoko project will take at the minimum of 12 years if not more, assuming it begins today. Moreover, as was pointed out above, the Henoko plan concerns the air facility only, and not the other support services. If these other projects are included it will probably take 20 years.

The 10th problem is the cost. Because of the need to tear down existing structures on Schwab, import building materials, and eventually attempt to relocate other bases down the road, the costs are going to be much higher than the original 10 billion dollars.

The 11th problem is that the Henoko move presents no grand vision for Okinawa and does nothing for Okinawa Prefecture as a whole economically, other than stimulus packages for the north.

The 12th (and by no means final) problem is the dual inability of the agency to think large and make any decision happen. In the past, such as the reversion of Okinawa to Japan in 1972, or even the SACO process, it was the Prime Minister's Office that took the lead. This time, it is the agency, which is not even a full ministry. While it has asked other agencies in the government to help it in implementing the Interim Report, they have all backed off.

These are not minor speed bumps but fundamentally unfixable problems that when taken together prove that the Henoko plan is flawed beyond hope. In light of the above, it is astonishing that Henoko found its way into the Interim Report at all.

A better option exists--a facility built off Katsuren Peninsula that would merge the functions of Futenma, Kinser, Naha Military Port, and the SDF Naha Air Base into one combined facility under SDF control. Constructed in shallow waters, far from any neighboring communities, it can be built quickly and inexpensively with proven methods and minimal environmental impact. Unlike the Henoko options, the Katsuren plan's most attractive part is that Okinawans originally proposed it. Without Okinawan participation, any plan would be unsuccessful. Indeed, in negotiations, nobody wins unless everyone wins. This is especially true now in the case of the base realignments in Okinawa. Katsuren, not Henoko, is the solution in that it relieves the so-called burden, maintains, if not strengthens capabilities as called for in the

Interim Report, and leads to the economic development of Okinawa as a whole. Negotiators, do the right thing before any more damage is done to the alliance and to relations with Okinawa Prefecture.

Eldridge, an associate professor at Osaka University's School of International Public Policy, regularly writes on Okinawa and U.S.-Japan relations and just completed his 50th visit to Okinawa Prefecture. He served as a scholar-in-residence at the headquarters of Marine Corps Forces Pacific in Hawaii from 2004-2005.

Libby John. 2006. **"U.S. Begins Construction on Rotation Base in Romania for 2,000 Soldiers."** Inside the Army 18/9 (March 6).

The Bush administration is taking the first steps toward creating rotational bases in Eastern Europe by starting construction of a facility in Romania that could accommodate up to 2,000 U.S. troops. The move is part of the administration's realignment of U.S. forces as spelled out in the 2004 Global Posture Review.

Late last year, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice signed an agreement with Romanian officials that provides the U.S. military access to two Romanian military facilities: the Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base, located in the southeast part of the country, and the Babadag Training Range.

The agreement, signed Dec. 6 2005, will also help establish the Eastern European Task Force, which will consist of a "small joint deployable headquarters element in Romania" and the use of Romanian and Bulgarian facilities for rotational training, exercises and operations, a Defense

Department spokesman told Inside the Army last week.

Army active and Reserve units participated in training exercises with Romanian troops last year at Babadag. Romania became a NATO member in 2004.

Last month, the Army Corps of Engineers Europe District announced it is taking bids for a contract to build a facility near the Babadag Training Center and to make improvements to the center itself.

The Corps posted a presolicitation notice in the Federal Business Opportunities for the design and construction services for a forward operating base and forward operating facilities in Romania.

According to the notice, posted Feb. 27, the project will be carried out in two phases. The first phase, scheduled to begin this December and last until December 2007, will consist of constructing the forward operating base in the Babadag training area. According to the notice, the facilities will be used to support the requirements of rotational training units of about 800 to 1,000 people, and will include delivery and construction of several structures.

The supporting facilities will integrate anti-terrorism measures, roads, walkways and site improvement, the Corps said.

"Utility infrastructure to support the requirements of training units of approximately 2,000 personnel includes installation of packaged water and sewer treatment plants, and basic electrical, water and sewer distribution and storage systems," the notice states.

Phase two, scheduled to begin in December 2007 and last through August 2008, involves

constructing the forward operating facilities. These basic facilities will be used to support the requirements of training units consisting of 1,200 personnel. Facilities will integrate anti-terrorism measures, roads, walks and site improvements, the notice stated.

The Feb. 27 notice did not include the cost of the project but a previous notice posted Feb. 24 said the estimated cost is between \$25 million to \$100 million. The Corps stated that "funds are not currently available for this requirement."

In an August 16, 2004, DOD briefing on the Global Posture Review, a senior defense official was asked about putting U.S. troops in Poland, Romania and Uzbekistan. The official said it was not an administration goal to shift U.S. forces from Western Europe to Eastern Europe.

"We're going to have ongoing training and exercises. We may have rotational deployments to those countries, but we're not going to be looking to station in big numbers to the east of the kind of forces that are in Germany today," the official said.

Establishing a presence overseas is part of DOD's global military force management, the senior defense official said. "And that is to say that we're looking at how rotational forces generally will be allocated every year to go to different regions for training, for operations, for exercises [and] for security cooperation activities with allies," the official continued.

The agreement with Romania is similar to other agreements the U.S. has around the world, the DOD spokesman said. "This agreement is critical to the implementation of our global defense posture realignment and sets forth the terms under which the

U.S. can use the facilities and areas in Romania," he said.

Other issues the agreement addresses include:

- * "Logistics support provided to U.S. forces by Romania;
- * "Prepositioning of equipment;
- * "Movement of aircraft and vehicles;
- * "Labor; and
- * "Protection of the environment."

The U.S. will be responsible for paying for the services it requested and rendered. Either the U.S. or Romania can terminate the agreement within one year's written notice, according to the DOD spokesman.

The spokesman said a similar deal is being negotiated with Bulgaria. "There will be six implementing agreements to be signed in the coming months that will detail how it will be carried out," he said.

Last year the congressionally-mandated Overseas Basing Commission issued its review of overseas U.S. military facilities. The review said the establishment of new facilities in Bulgaria and Romania will offer additional training areas for U.S. rotational use, but "investment for development, environmental clean up and instrumentation will be required overtime to provide adequate training facilities for joint and/or combined capability."

The Associated Press. 2006. **"Two Seek Adjutant General Post."** Associated Press Newswires (March 6, 15:00).

Columbia, S.C. (AP) - South Carolina National Guard commander Gen. Stan Spears said Monday he will seek a fourth term as adjutant general.

Spears, a Republican, has held the post for 11 years, and has presided over the largest deployment of Guard personnel since World War II.

Glenn Lindman, a 24-year veteran of the Army, Army Reserve and National Guard, is running as a Democrat.

Spears said he has realigned the structure of the force, worked to improve Guard benefits and helped protect state military installations during the recent round of Base Realignment and Closure.

"Over 70 percent of soldiers and Air Guard members have responded bravely to the call of duty in trouble spots like Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo," Spears said in a statement. "In this time of crisis, responding successfully to our conflicts abroad requires continuity and proven leadership."

Sen. Lindsey Graham and U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson endorsed their fellow Republican at his announcement here.

Lindman, of Woodruff, is the former president of ComputerPlus Sales & Service in Greer. He retired from that position to deploy with his Guard unit to Iraq. Lindman said he is running to prevent the reduction of the state's Guard units. He also said the position should be appointed, rather than elected, and that the Guard needs to change its promotion system, because there are few minorities in its upper ranks.

Unattributed. 2006. "**HCR 197, 2005-2006.**" LegAlert (March 4).

Rep Lee, Barbara

Declaring That It Is the Policy of the United States Not to Enter into Any Base Agreement with the Government of Iraq That Would Lead to a Permanent United States Military Presence in Iraq.

20050630 * REFERRED TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

Gene Rector. 2006. "**Robins to Receive Huge Boost If Military Construction Package Is Approved.**" Macon (GA) Telegraph (March 4).

More than \$60 million in new facilities will be coming to Robins Air Force Base if Congress approves the Defense Department's fiscal year 2007 military construction package.

Included are a \$24.2 million supply distribution center, a \$30 million advance metal finishing facility and \$8.6 million for a new aircraft maintenance hangar.

The distribution center * formally called a consolidated containerization point * would implement the Base Realignment and Closure plan to create four support regions throughout the country, each with a strategic distribution platform or hub.

Robins is one of the four, along with centers in Pennsylvania, Oklahoma and California.

"The primary role of the center is to serve as a consolidation point for material being shipped overseas to military customers," said Jackie Noble, a command affairs officer

at Defense Distribution Center Headquarters in New Cumberland, Pa.

"Today, this capability exists only at depots in California and Pennsylvania," Noble said in an e-mail response to a reporter's query about the distribution center.

The BRAC ruling will require construction of a similar facility in Oklahoma City. BRAC is a federal process used to evaluate military installations for closure or workload changes.

Col. Elizabeth Moore, who commands the Defense Distribution Center at Robins, said the consolidation containerization point role would be a new mission for the base.

"All types of material will be shipped in here, then consolidated and reshipped to overseas locations wherever the warfighters are," she said. "The assets will come from various sources, including contractors and other Defense Logistics Agency warehouses."

The size and scope of the Robins operation and how cargo would be divided among the four centers currently is under evaluation.

"There are a number of steps that have to be taken within DLA," Moore said. "That's taking place right now in concert with the services and combatant commands."

Moore said the Robins facility will be similar in size to the current center in San Joaquin, Calif. "But until we see what commodities we'll be dealing with and who we'll be supporting from this location, we won't have a firm idea of size and scope," she said. The \$24.2 million price tag is based on anticipated square footage.

The new metal finishing facility will modernize a number of metal coating and treatment jobs within the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, improve efficiency and reduce environmental risks.

Wendy Johnston, chief of the transformation division within plans and programs at the center, said the immediate payoff will be a 15 percent reduction in time required to treat metal parts.

"Many of the parts we take off aircraft require plating or something similar," she said. "We have a facility now, but it's labor intensive and involves a lot of wet processes. Parts are dunked into a solution, dried, then moved over to another solution. We also have to use people to move components from one tank to another."

The new plant * which will include \$25 million in new equipment funded from other sources * will employ state-of-the-art robotics, programmable hoists, vaporless plating paints, water recycling and some dry plating processes.

"Overall, we will be able to reduce hazardous waste by 75 percent, water usage by about 70 percent, and treated parts should have greater reliability because the new processes are more advanced," Johnston said.

The new equipment could have been installed in the existing facility but the process would have taken up to three years.

"In the meantime, we wouldn't have had a place to do our plating," Johnston said. "So the only real answer was a new building. We'll eventually take the old equipment out of the existing facility and use the space for other types of production."

The new aircraft hangar will enable the center to consolidate several F-15 maintenance tasks, including non-destruction inspections, canopy repair and some stripping work.

“We’re performing those all over the flight line right now,” she said. “This will enable us to centralize almost all of our F-15 operation into one area and it should decrease the time required to perform depot maintenance on the F-15 by at least two days.”

To contact Gene Rector, call 923-3109, extension 239, or e-mail grector@macontel.com.

Newt Gingrich. 2006. “**A Leaner, Meaner Military.**” The Washington Post (March 4): A17.

The Post’s Feb. 13 editorial “Mr. Rumsfeld’s Flawed Vision” managed to miss the major achievements of a remarkable Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). This was the most thorough and systematically managed review in Pentagon history. The review board, co-chaired by Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England and Adm. Edmund Giambastiani, spent half a year forcing changes in a complex bureaucratic system famous for its ability to hide and wait for the current civilian leadership to disappear so it can continue its old, comfortable ways. Only by sheer force of will has the senior leadership, under the direction of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, muscled through substantial and historic change in the Defense Department.

This effort to craft a change-oriented QDR has to be seen in the larger context of change throughout the Defense Department. The fact that Gen. Peter Schoomaker was brought out of retirement to impose Rumsfeld’s vision on a reluctant Army is the best example of the determined, systematic change involved. Schoomaker has become the most single-minded Army modernizer since George Catlett Marshall. As Army chief of staff he ended the individual replacement system, dating to 1917, which everyone knew was destructive to unit cohesion but no one had had the will and determination to replace. Ending the practice of heedlessly moving individual soldiers in and out of units has produced the highest level of unit readiness in modern history.

The Army has shifted from 11 unwieldy World War II-type divisions to 77 rapidly deployable brigades designed for modern war. This makes it more deployable, more usable and more effective. Army modernization is being extended by the creation of more Special Operations units and the Marine Corps is being turned into a more effective organization for what I call “the long war against the irreconcilable wing of Islam.”

The Navy and Air Force have continued to shift toward unmanned vehicles, more effective power projection and more sophisticated capabilities to contain and deter China. The shift toward unmanned vehicles alone would have been considered dramatic a decade ago. The development of new submarine capability is a powerful tool as Chinese imports and seaborne trade increase.

In terms of reshaping the Pentagon, the largest and most comprehensive base closing in defense history was recently completed; it will yield billions in savings.

Under Rumsfeld's leadership, the Pentagon has also reconfigured forces from Europe and Korea into more usable and effective form. Furthermore, these changes have been made while increasing the amount of training and cooperation undertaken with our allies.

At the Pentagon, the creation of the National Security Personnel System * which is being challenged in the courts * is historic and vitally necessary to the effective use of resources for national security. The fact that it has been opposed by every labor union in the Defense Department is one indication of how thorough and far-reaching it is.

There are a number of steps that have to be taken to modernize the nondefense aspects of national security. As Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Warner has noted, large segments of the civilian government are not doing their job and in some cases are not even showing up for their assignments. Rumsfeld is aware of these problems, but it is hard to imagine that he could challenge other departments in a public document such as the QDR.

The Post wrongly asserts that "Mr. Rumsfeld essentially proposes to reinforce and perpetuate the greatest single mistake of his tenure, which was failing to deploy enough soldiers to win the wars the United States has taken on." In fact, there is no evidence that more troops would have accomplished anything more than what was accomplished in Afghanistan. The mistake in Iraq was not keeping the Iraqi regular army intact to assume the responsibility of policing in June 2003. Additional troops were not sent to Iraq for the very reason that military leaders did not want to create an even bigger footprint leading to greater alienation and hostility on the part of the Iraqi people.

Finally, The Post seems upset that some new weapons systems have not been entirely eliminated. The F-22, for example, has been cut from 380 aircraft to 180, reflecting the low likelihood of major air battles against a large and modern adversary. Yet there may come a morning when * facing a challenge in Iran, North Korea or potentially with China in the Taiwan Straits * the F-22 will prove its worth. The issue with next-generation aircraft is not, as The Post asserts, a question of air superiority but of survivability against anti-aircraft missiles when Russia's and other countries are prepared to sell their best systems to a range of countries that oppose the United States. It is also true that the Navy continues to build aircraft carriers. But carriers have been modernized, and today's movable naval airfields are far more capable than they were a generation ago.

Someone at The Post has a fixation on "weapons systems killed" as proof of leadership ability in the Defense Department. That fixation reduces change in national security to a narrow and inaccurate calculation.

Rumsfeld's second tour of duty as defense secretary marks a period of dramatic change in which the United States has been simultaneously fighting a global war against Islamic extremists, conducting campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, making preparations to preempt North Korea and Iran if necessary, undertaking strategies to contain China over the next two decades, dramatically changing the structure and rhythm of the Army, and beginning a revolution in both special operations capabilities and unmanned vehicles. This is an extraordinary level of change, and the QDR is best seen as one more building

block in this new architecture of 21st-century American security.

The writer, a former speaker of the House, serves on the Defense Policy Board, to which he was appointed by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Unattributed. 2006. **"N.Y. Power Authority to Help Sponsor Niagara Military Affairs Council Celebration Dinner."** US Fed News (March 3).

Lewiston, N.Y., March 3 * The New York State Power Authority issued the following news release:

The New York Power Authority (NYPA) will join with other area groups and organizations in sponsoring an upcoming community celebration dinner to recognize those who participated in the efforts to keep the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station open. The NIMAC Celebration Dinner will take place on Saturday, March 18 at Antonio's Restaurant, Banquet and Conference Center.

"Governor Pataki, Congressman Tom Reynolds and a slew of other leaders in Western New York worked to save this base, and NYPA is honored to be a part of this event and to partner with the Niagara Military Affairs Council (NIMAC), area elected officials, community leaders and thousands of volunteers who contributed to this extraordinary success story," said Timothy S. Carey, NYPA CEO and President.

This marks the latest in a series of measures NYPA has taken to demonstrate its support for the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station. In 2003, Governor Pataki's Task Force on Military Bases identified power costs at the Air Base as a priority action item to help

meet the challenge of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

"The Niagara Falls Air Base plays a critical role in keeping our nation free and strong, while making important contributions to the local economy," Governor Pataki stressed at the time. "Reducing its power costs will support vital military missions and help protect its 3,000 jobs."

In response, NYPA trustees approved an allocation of 2,300 kilowatts of low-cost hydro power to the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority for use at the Niagara Falls Air Base.

Last year, NYPA also "stepped to the plate" to help sponsor a "Save the Base Rally" at a Buffalo Bison's game at Dunn Tire Park. To demonstrate widespread community support, anyone who wrote five letters to the BRAC commission received two tickets to the game. Letters were available at the Power Vista, the visitors center at NYPA's Niagara Power Project, and were distributed and collected by NYPA staff members at a number of community events.

NIMAC Chairman Merrell Lane said "The New York Power Authority has been an important partner in the success of the community's and NIMAC's overall effort to save the Niagara Air Reserve Station. They have been with us from the start with important power allocations that reduced the base's operating costs and also with financial support for NIMAC events."

Tickets are \$30 per person and are available by calling the NIMAC office at 716-283-4008.

Wayne Woolley. 2006. **"Guard Chief Reports Stress Syndrome Soaring with Vets."** The Star-Ledger (Newark, NJ) (March 3): 21.

New Jersey's top military officer said yesterday the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs more than doubled its budget this year to treat veterans for post-traumatic stress disorder.

At a hearing of the state Senate Judiciary Committee, during which he was unanimously endorsed for a second term as adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Glenn Rieth said his department budgeted \$800,000 this year * up from \$300,000 the previous year * for post-traumatic stress disorder treatment for veterans, some of whom fought in Iraq or Afghanistan. He said he may seek more funding in the next fiscal year, which begins in July.

"About 25 percent of the kids are having some problems," Rieth said. "It's not just New Jersey's problem. It's America's problem."

During the 30-minute hearing, Rieth also said he will be "fully engaged" in efforts to reuse Fort Monmouth after the Pentagon closes it in 2010.

A career National Guard officer, Rieth was named to the Cabinet post by Gov. James E. McGreevey in 2002. He was renominated by Gov. Jon Corzine in January and is expected to be confirmed by the full Senate March 13.

As adjutant general, Rieth, 48, oversees the agency that provides services to New Jersey's 600,000 veterans. He also commands the 5,900 soldiers and 2,400 airmen of the state National Guard.

State-funded treatment for veterans with post-traumatic stress or other mental health problems supplements wider programs run by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, which is responsible for the bulk of veterans' medical care.

President Bush's proposed VA budget calls for \$2.2 billion for mental health treatment, including post-traumatic stress disorder. A recent Army study found one-third of the troops who served in Iraq sought psychological help in the year after their return.

Lt. Col. Roberta Niedt, a military and Veterans Affairs spokeswoman, said the state mental health program is handling 1,125 cases of post-traumatic stress disorder. The number includes New Jersey National Guard troops and other service members who have returned from combat zones over the past two years, as well as veterans of previous wars.

The numbers are on the rise. In 2004, the state handled 118 new cases, and the number increased to 268 last year. There have been 82 new cases since January, including 26 National Guardsmen or reservists who served in Iraq.

"At this rate, there's potential to have 400 by the end of the year," Niedt said. "You can see the potential for this to continue to increase."

Niedt said she anticipates the increase because of two factors: the continuing return of troops from Iraq and the establishment in April of a state hotline for veterans' mental health issues.

In addition, she said, veterans have become less reluctant to ask for help. "The stigma is

being removed from post-traumatic stress,” Niedt said.

At yesterday’s hearing, Sen. Joseph Kyrillos (R-Monmouth) asked Rieth about his agency’s role in the future of Fort Monmouth, the Army communications research center ordered closed by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission last year. State officials are trying to ensure that the installation’s 1,100 acres in Monmouth County are smoothly turned over to local control after the closure. The effort also includes creating high-tech jobs to replace the 15,000 high-paying civilian defense jobs related to Fort Monmouth.

Rieth said Corzine has directed him to play a major role in the transition back to local control after the fort closes and its mission moves to the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland.

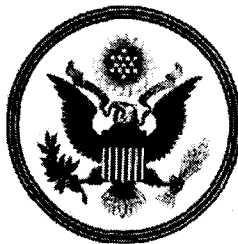
“The governor has made it clear that as the state’s top military officer, he wants me fully engaged,” Rieth said.

Rieth said his agency will be given greater responsibility for protecting the state’s six other major military installations from future Pentagon cutbacks. No individual state agency had this responsibility in the past.

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Incentives plan proposed to make risk zone BRAC friendly

By JON W. GLASS, The Virginian-Pilot

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Last updated: 10:51 PM

VIRGINIA BEACH - In their bid to save the jets at Oceana Naval Air Station, city officials have crafted a plan to eliminate incompatible businesses in high-risk areas around the base.

Under the plan, property owners would get incentives to convert existing incompatible businesses or to open new commercial ventures that the Navy considers compatible in Accident Potential Zone 1.

Business operators in the Clear Zone, the highest-risk area for a jet crash, would be offered incentives to relocate.

City Manager Jim Spore said Friday the plan is an innovative attempt to address the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission's mandate to "roll back" incompatible development around Oceana or risk losing its fighter jets.

"It's the critical piece," Spore said.

The proposal will be presented Monday to a citizen's committee for review and then to the City Council on Tuesday.

If adopted by the council March 28, the proposal will be added to a package of development restrictions the council approved Dec. 20 as part of the city's effort to comply with the base-closure commission.

The council's vote will occur just three days before the city's March 31 deadline to present its plan to the Defense Department's inspector general, who will rule whether the city satisfied the BRAC requirements.

In August, the BRAC panel ordered the city to halt and roll back incompatible growth in APZ-1.

The City Council adopted a range of measures to halt further growth, but it rejected the demand to create a program to buy and condemn homes and most businesses in the zone. About 3,400 homes are in APZ-1.

Instead, the city is proposing to roll back commercial uses the Navy says don't mix with an air base. Generally, businesses that employ large numbers of people or draw a lot of customers are viewed by the Navy as incompatible.

City Attorney Les Lilley said Friday that the plan contains safeguards for existing home owners in APZ-1. It's not an attempt, Lilley said, to gradually convert existing residential neighborhoods into business or industrial areas.

"This program is not a threat to those neighborhoods," Lilley said.

Sections of such primary commercial corridors as Virginia Beach Boulevard and London Bridge Road lie within the APZ-1. The Navy considers dozens of businesses there, including retail shops and offices, as incompatible with Oceana's mission.

The goal of the plan, city officials said, is to offer incentives making it attractive for owners to convert them into compatible businesses, such as mini-warehouses or auto-repair shops.

The incentives include a speedier approval process, rebates of certain business taxes and fees and tax breaks on renovating or replacing an incompatible business. Some of the existing businesses are old and run-down, Lilley said.

"We're trying to find uses compatible to this area to locate there so we don't just end up with a brownfield," Lilley said. "We're trying to turn it into a win-win."

Spore said he believes the plan complies with the intent of the BRAC order. Even if the city had agreed to condemn homes and businesses, he said, it would take at least 40 years to purchase the estimated \$700 million worth of property - based on the BRAC demand to spend at least \$15 million a year.

"You'd never get there," Spore said. "We're trying to get positive results for the property owners and for the Navy, and we're going to show the inspector general our plan gets a lot more done than the BRAC plan."

Scott Canon. 2006. **"Jet Pilots Will Shift to Bombers."** The Kansas City (MO) Star (March 9): 7.

St. Louis-Based Unit Will Move to Base near Knob Noster

An effort to keep hundreds of military jobs in Missouri has made for some strange bedfellows at the nation's lone stealth bomber base.

Air National Guard pilots and ground crews accustomed to hard-banking supersonic F-15 fighters — without their jets — soon will join the B-2 bomber force at Whiteman Air Force Base about 60 miles east of Kansas City near Knob Noster, Mo.

After the state's congressional delegation trumpeted the move Monday, Air Force officials said Wednesday that they did not yet know how the two units would team together.

A spokesman for Whiteman — the active-duty caretaker for the military's rarest and most-precious bomber — said base officials were still working that out. A spokeswoman for the Missouri National Guard, while declaring the shift as groundbreaking, could not say whether the fighter pilots would move into B-2 cockpits or if ground crews would tend to its high-tech controls and delicate radar-fooling skin.

Former Air Force pilots predicted, at minimum, a clash of cultures.

Fighter pilots are seen as the hotshots of the Air Force, pumped full of the daring and athletic skills needed for twirling through clouds in dogfights. Bomber pilots tend to operate with more reserve, excelling at their missions through steady calculation — qualities accentuated in a push-button plane like the \$2.2 billion-per-copy B-2.

"This is an unusual mix," said Thomas Keaney, a retired Air Force colonel, former bomber pilot and the current director of the Merrill Center for Strategic Studies at Johns Hopkins University. "There may be some reluctance on the part of fighter pilots to switch to bombers, and of the bomber pilots to share a plane like that."

The 131st Air National Guard Fighter Wing had been booked to leave Lambert-St. Louis International Airport, the fallout of cost-saving from last year's Base Realignment and Closure process. Its fighter jets will leave the state, but this week's announcement suggests that at least some of

the people assigned to the unit will work alongside the 509th Bomb Wing.

Brad Swezey, a spokesman for the National Guard Bureau at the Pentagon, likened the new arrangement to a condominium time share, in which the duties of flying or maintaining the stealth bomber could be divided between National Guard and active-duty Air Force units.

“We have this experience base of pilots in the Air National Guard,” he said. “We have to make sure they’re flying important and relevant missions.”

Training a pilot to fly the B-2 can take eight months to a year. Maintenance crews require about a month and a half of training followed by a year and a half of on-the-job training.

The Air Force already has, depending on training cycles, 80 to 100 pilots qualified to pilot the massive two-seater bat-winged jet – more than enough to man even extended missions of the 21 planes. Like the pilots of the 131st, the current commander of one of the 509th’s two squadrons spent the earlier part of his career soaring in F-15 fighters.

Originally designed for nuclear warfare, the B-2 has been adapted for conventional battles by the Air Force. Pilots flew a series of sorties from Missouri on bombing missions over the former Yugoslavia in 1999. It was called into action again 2001 to fly from Whiteman on bombing raids on Afghanistan. And in 2003, stealth bombers took off from Missouri and from the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean to missions in Iraq.

Keaney said that shifting to the B-2 could require an adjustment to the fighter jockeys in the National Guard unit who are

accustomed to flying regularly and pushing a plane to its limits.

Even B-2 training missions are elaborately plotted tasks, because part of the plane’s ability to avoid detection by an enemy is the way its navigation is plotted to the smallest detail. Plus, the Air Force calculates that the cost of flying the jet runs about \$15,000 per hour. An additional 40 to 50 hours of labor are needed on the ground for every hour in flight.

“You don’t go around and jump in,” Keaney said. “Any time we fly them it’s a big deal.”

First Glance

The 131st Air National Guard Fighter Wing will move from St. Louis to Whiteman Air Force Base near Knob Noster, keeping about 250 jobs in Missouri.

To reach Scott Canon, call (816) 234-4754 or send e-mail to scanon@kcstar.com.

Carol Morello. 2006. “**Fairfax’s Go-To Woman Says Farewell to the Hill.**” The Washington Post (March 9): T6.

As Warner’s Chief of Staff, Susan A. Magill Earned Bipartisan Admiration

Susan Aheron Magill’s wooden desk stands beside a large, paned window overlooking the U.S. Capitol, gleaming in the crisp light of a winter afternoon.

“I’m going to miss the dome,” she said wistfully, apologizing for the disarray as she maneuvered around boxes she was filling with possessions.

Magill has worked on Capitol Hill since 1973, the last 20 years as chief of staff for Virginia Republican Sen. John W. Warner. Her tenure has included seven presidencies, two impeachment proceedings and the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Capitol Hill is where she met her husband, John, chief of staff for a Republican congressman from California. It is where they went on their first date, at the cafeteria of the Rayburn House Office Building.

Last month, the Mount Vernon resident packed up three decades of memories to take a job in the government affairs office of the Pew Charitable Trusts.

In the nation's capital, chiefs of staff can acquire reputations for ruthless efficiency and partisanship at the expense of alliances. Think Karl Rove. But Magill, named by Washingtonian magazine as one of the city's 50 most powerful women in 1997, has won admirers across the political spectrum while advancing Warner's agenda. Not only is she competent and politically savvy, these fans say, but she also impresses them with a charm that is evident as she escorts a visitor into her boss's office with a gentle hand on the elbow.

"Susan has been, without a doubt, the most responsive person I've dealt with on Capitol Hill as far as issues that confronted me," said Fairfax County Supervisor Gerald W. Hyland (D-Mount Vernon), who has requested a special county resolution honoring her. "She's the person I instinctively turn to."

Gerald E. Connolly, the board's Democratic chairman, said he intends to name a day after Magill.

"For the last quarter of a century, Susan has been known as the go-to person if you want

to get something done for Virginia, and Fairfax in particular, on the Hill," he said. "Their ethos has been, they are there to serve, and politics end the minute you come in the door. She's made the relationship between federal and local governments work."

Warner said Magill's counsel has been valuable because she has had no fear of disagreeing with him since he hired her 24 years ago as a legislative aide.

"We deal with each other as co-equals," Warner said in an interview in his office, on a day when his phone rang incessantly with constituents calling to complain about U.S. port operations being turned over to a company owned by the United Arab Emirates. "When she disagrees with me, she lets me have it with both barrels."

Of Magill's politics, Warner says, "She's a little to the right of me."

"How do you know that?" Magill challenged Warner, whom she considers not only a mentor but like a grandfather to her son and daughter.

"You're always trying to push me a little more to the conservative side," he replied.

Her advice is good, he said, plus, "She loves the state of Virginia."

Magill, 56, is a native, born and raised in Roanoke. Her father ran a highway sign business out of their garage, and her mother did the accounting and office work. The family also owned a small beef cattle farm in nearby New Castle. She and her younger brother spent weekends doing chores.

"We didn't hire anyone," she said with a mixture of pride and chagrin at the memory.

Her interest in politics and public policy was sparked when she was a student at the College of William and Mary in the activist 1960s. After graduating, she came to Washington to work for her congressman, Republican Rep. M. Caldwell Butler.

Far fewer women worked on Capitol Hill in those days, and Magill joined a women's caucus that agitated on behalf of issues that now seem ordinary, like equal pay for equal work. She said she never experienced sex discrimination, however.

"I focused on what I was trying to do, and no one shut the door in my face because I'm a woman," she said.

Magill next worked in the Washington office of Virginia Republican Gov. John N. Dalton. After Democrat Charles S. Robb was elected in 1981 to succeed him, she knew she was bound to be replaced. By chance, she ran into Warner at a reception. Hearing of her need for a new job, he whipped out a business card and wrote a list of tasks for her to work on part time during her search. After she wrote a newsletter and helped prepare a strategy to convince a physics lab to locate in Virginia, Warner hired her as a full-time legislative aide. Four years later, he named her chief of staff, in charge of 25 people in Washington and 10 in his Virginia offices.

Fairfax County officials said Magill helped them with problems large and small.

Hyland described her as the point person in the county's successful effort to get the National Museum of the U.S. Army located at Fort Belvoir. She also has helped steer the county through the process of appealing for money to build the roads and schools it expects to need because of Base

Realignment and Closure recommendations, which would bring an estimated 21,000 defense jobs to Fairfax.

Politicians aren't the only ones who have Magill to thank. Little League players faced the loss of the Woodlawn ballfield on Fort Belvoir when the Army wanted to build housing there. Hyland said he called Magill, and she arranged for him and other county officials to meet with officials from the military, plus Warner, Sen. George Allen (R), and Reps. Thomas M. Davis III (R) and James P. Moran Jr. (D). The meeting ended with an agreement for a land swap between Fort Belvoir and the county, preserving the 12-acre Little League field and designating 21 acres of county parkland for military housing in exchange.

"She had them all in the room," Hyland said. "It was 'Okay, boys, we need to fix this problem.' It happened because of the intervention of Susan."

Magill said she sees herself as a practical person who tries to solve problems.

"Sometimes you've just got to get all the players in the room at a level where they can make a decision," she said of the ballpark negotiations. "It was a grocery-store issue. I couldn't go to the grocery without someone bugging me about it."

Dan Mica, a former Democratic congressman from Florida who heads the Credit Union National Association, described Magill as a rarity in official Washington — someone who genuinely listens.

"If you're with her, she's with you," said Mica, who is Magill's neighbor in Mount Vernon. "She's not looking over your shoulder to shake the next hand."

Magill said she would not have been able to do her job if Warner had not accommodated the time demands of a working mother. She treasures photographs of Warner visiting her daughter's grade-school class and attending her son's high school graduation. Warner allowed her to work out of his Roanoke office 18 months ago when her brother was dying of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also called Lou Gehrig's disease.

Warner bounces the compliments back to Magill and her husband.

"She and John have balanced the challenge of raising a young family with the rigors and rotten hours of Capitol Hill filibusters," he said.

Warner said he supported Magill's decision to retire and take the Pew job because she became eligible for a pension. Had she continued in her position, under tax law, she would have effectively earned only a fraction of her salary.

Magill said her departure does not mean that Warner has already decided not to run for reelection. She said she expects him to make a decision next year.

John Magill said his wife will probably have more time to devote to serving as rector for William and Mary, and on the advisory board of George Washington's estate at Mount Vernon.

"Certainly the separation from the Hill is going to be something she'll miss," he said. "But she enjoys her work on foundations. I think there's a niche very much to Susan's liking. She'll be happier."

Magill said one thing she has no interest in is running for public office.

"I've seen what it's like," she said with a laugh. "I'm a behind-the-scenes person. I can go home on weekends, instead of traveling to chicken dinners."

As a parting gift, Warner's staff gave Magill a lamp for her new desk and a donation to ALS research.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Fitch Rates Charles County, Maryland's GOs 'AA+'."** Business Wire (March 8, 17:46).

Stable Outlook

Fitch Ratings assigns an 'AA+' rating to Charles County, MD's (the county) approximately \$53 million in general obligation (GO) bonds, consisting of \$43 million in consolidated public improvement bonds of 2006 (tax-exempt) and \$10 million in public improvement bonds of 2006 (taxable). Fitch also affirms the 'AA+' rating on the county's \$191 million of outstanding GO debt. The Rating Outlook is Stable.

The bonds are scheduled for competitive sale on March 13. The proceeds of the tax-exempt bonds will be used to finance various capital projects. The taxable bonds will finance road projects through an agreement with American Community Properties Trust, a private developer.

The 'AA+' rating reflects Charles County's strong financial performance guided by sound fiscal policies, continued tax base growth, and manageable debt levels. The county was able to maintain its financial flexibility despite the Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing by the parent of the county's largest taxpayer, Mirant Mid-Atlantic Generation

LLC (Mirant). Mirant has subsequently emerged from bankruptcy and is current on its county tax obligations. Fitch's near-term concerns regarding the impact on the Indian Head Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC), the county's largest employer, have been mitigated as recent base realignment and closure (BRAC) recommendations call for a reduction of only approximately 100 direct jobs at the facility. Upward movement in the rating remains hindered by an economy that is growing rapidly and predominately residential in nature.

Charles County remains a relatively affordable Washington, D.C. suburb, exporting about one-half of its workforce within the capital region. Efforts to diversify the economy are ongoing with several projects under way, adding class A office and industrial/flex space for technology and research and development related opportunities. The county's unemployment rate in December 2005 was a low 2.8%, well below the state and national averages. Per capita personal income in 2003 equaled 89% and 106% of the state and national averages, respectively.

Financial management is strong, affecting current operations positively and guiding long-range planning efforts. County fund balances are consistently sound, exceeding the policy goal of 8% of operating revenue since at least fiscal 1997. The unreserved fund balance for fiscal 2005 equaled \$40.6 million, or 17.5% of expenditures and transfers out, up significantly from \$15.5 million and 7.3% of expenditures in fiscal 2004 due to conservative budgeting and significant increases in recordation and income tax receipts. A surplus of nearly \$17 million is projected at the close of fiscal 2006 reflecting receipt of Mirant's fiscal 2004 tax payment of approximately \$16

million, which had been held up by bankruptcy proceedings. The county maintains additional financial flexibility through its income tax rate, which at 2.9% remains below the state mandated cap of 3.2%.

Direct debt levels are moderate, net of self-supporting enterprise-related debt, at 1.5% of market value and \$1,242 per capita. The county's policy of issuing bonds with maturities no longer than 15 years results in rapid repayment of outstanding debt, with 78% amortized in 10 years. The fiscal years 2006-2010 capital improvement plan (CIP) totals \$457 million and will be funded by bonds (32% general fund supported and 25% self-supported), non-county sources (34%), and pay-as-you-go sources (9%).

Fitch's rating definitions and the terms of use of such ratings are available on the agency's public site, www.fitchratings.com. Published ratings, criteria and methodologies are available from this site, at all times. Fitch's code of conduct, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, affiliate firewall, compliance and other relevant policies and procedures are also available from the 'Code of Conduct' section of this site.

Fitch Ratings, New York Kenneth T. Weinstein, 212-908-0571 Jessalynn K. Moro, 212-908-0608 Christine Pollak, 212-908-0526 (Media Relations)

Kimberly Hefling. 2006. **"Pa. Guard Associations Lobby to Keep Troops."** Associated Press Newswires (March 8, 14:17).

Thousands of troops could be cut this year from the Pennsylvania National Guard and a

big air base in the Philadelphia suburbs faces an uncertain future.

Resolving these issues is key for leaders from the Pennsylvania National Guard Associations and several members of Pennsylvania's congressional delegation. They met Wednesday for an annual breakfast that is part of the associations' annual lobbying trip to Capitol Hill.

Under Bush's 2007 budget submission, Pennsylvania military leaders fear one of the Guard's heavy combat brigades – about 3,500 troops – could be cut. They are also worried the state's Air Guard could lose troops.

President Bush and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld have made private assurances to the nation's governors that the federal government would try to find money so that Guard units won't be cut, but many politicians say they are still concerned the money will not be there.

"There's no way we can afford the type of changes they want to make, and we're trying to work our way through that," said Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., the senior Democrat on the House Appropriations defense subcommittee.

Sen. Rick Santorum said during the breakfast he met Tuesday with Navy Secretary Gordon England, and is working to make sure the Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base has a strong homeland security and national security function.

Last year, the base closure commission unanimously voted to end operations at Willow Grove, which is home to Air Force and Navy reserves and other military units.

But it did not recommend deactivating the 111th Fighter Wing, a Pennsylvania Air National Guard unit at the base after a federal judge ruled the Pentagon did not have the authority to deactivate it.

There has been ongoing discussion since then about what will happen to Willow Grove, and the issue has not yet been resolved in the courts.

"We have been going to bat to make sure we have a flying mission there and a robust presence beyond that," Santorum said.

Maj. Gen. Jessica Wright, the state's top military commander, said the Guard's top funding priority is the construction of a \$32.5 million surface maintenance facility near Pittsburgh that would replace four inadequate maintenance facilities. The Air Guard is seeking as its top priority \$2.8 million in equipment for a medical support unit in Pittsburgh.

The Pennsylvania Guard with its 19,000 troops and 107 facilities has a \$541.9 million annual economic impact in the state, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

About 2,000 members of the Pennsylvania Guard's 2nd Brigade Combat Team are expected to return this summer from a deployment in Iraq. More than 10,000 Pennsylvania Guard troops have fought in Afghanistan and Iraq since Sept. 11, 2001, and about 2,500 troops went to Louisiana to assist in the cleanup after Hurricane Katrina.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Greater Cleveland Partnership Selects Frederick R. Nance to Chair Board of Directors."** PRNewswire (March 8, 12:20).

The Board of Directors of the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) at its Annual Meeting of Members this morning selected Frederick R. Nance to serve as chairman for a two year term. Nance replaces Alexander M. Cutler, president and CEO of Eaton Corp., who served two years as GCP's first chairman.

"Fred's commitment and service to GCP are a testament to his capabilities as a leader and he is the right person to lead GCP," said Cutler.

As the chairman of the Cleveland Defense Industry Alliance (CDIA), Nance led the successful effort to save Cleveland's Defense Finance and Accounting Service office. Nance testified before the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission hearing in Buffalo, NY, arguing that the Pentagon was wrong in its recommendation to close Cleveland's DFAS office and take 1,100 jobs from downtown. In the wake of the BRAC Commission decision to not only maintain the Cleveland DFAS office, but to grow it by 700 jobs, the CDIA continues its efforts as it works with other community leaders to find a downtown office site, to recruit workers from cities that are losing DFAS facilities, and to train local workers to fill the positions.

"Fred's dedication to Cleveland is tireless and his leadership is proven," said Joe Roman, president and CEO of the Greater Cleveland Partnership. "His stellar performance during the BRAC process helped Cleveland overcome seemingly insurmountable odds. I look forward to working with Fred as we confront the challenges and opportunities facing Cleveland."

Nance, who previously served in the GCP Board of Directors as a vice chairman for advocacy, is the managing partner of the Squire, Sanders & Dempsey Cleveland office.

"In its first two years, under Sandy Cutler's leadership, the Greater Cleveland Partnership has helped the private sector coalesce around a common agenda," said Nance. "Small and large businesses must work together to lead this region on matters of economic growth and economic development. While we will work with our partners at the foundations and in the public sector, it is Cleveland business leaders who wake up every day and go to bed every night with a return on investment measurement on their mind."

During his term, Nance will focus on:

- Accelerating the regional marketing initiative
- Helping the new mayoral administration succeed
- Working with foundations to advance economic development priorities
- Sorting out GCP's role in a busy political landscape
- Building on advocacy successes

Nance graduated from Harvard University in 1975 with a B.A. and from University of Michigan in 1978 with a J.D. Nance is also a member of the Boards of The Cleveland Foundation, United Way of Greater Cleveland, BioEnterprise, the Cleveland Clinic, and the Catholic Charities Foundation. He is a life member of the US Court of Appeals Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference.

During the GCP's Annual Meeting of Members, it was announced that eighteen

current board members were re-elected, while thirteen new board members were elected to fill vacancies and seats created by board expansion.

Re-elected Board Members

Scott Chaikin, Dix & Eaton

David Goldberg, Ohio Savings

Brian E. Hall, Industrial Transport Solutions

Edward O. Handy III, Charter One

Edward M. Hundert, Case Western

Reserve University

James D. Ireland III, Early Stage Partners

Joe Lopez, New Era Builders

Stephanie McHenry, ShoreBank

Sandra Pianalto, Federal Reserve Bank

Robert H. Rawson Jr., Jones Day

Michael Schwartz, Cleveland State University

Fareed Siddiq, Smith Barney Inc.

Carol A. Staiger, Vantage Point Marketing Consultants

Jerry Sue Thornton, Cuyahoga

Community College

Les C. Vinney, STERIS Corp.

Eric Von Hendrix, MWV Pinnacle LLC

Scott Wolstein, Developers Diversified Realty Corp.

Thomas F. Zenty III, University Hospitals Health System

New Board Members

Arthur F. Anton, Swagelok Co.

Brent D. Ballard, Calfee Halter & Griswold LLP

William F. Christopher, Alcoa

Lisa L. Hong, eQuest Strategies LLC

AJ Hyland, Hyland Software

Richard A. Johnson, Kaleidoscope Magazine LLC

Donald T. Misheff, Ernst & Young LLP

Curtis E. Moll, MTD Products Inc.

David L. Pugh, Applied Industrial Technologies

Timothy Reynolds, Tribute Inc.

Samuel A. Steinhouse, DMI

Manufacturing Inc.

Andre Thornton, Global Promotions & Incentives Inc.

Eric Tolbert, Eric Tolbert & Associates

The Greater Cleveland Partnership, the primary voice for businesses in Greater Cleveland, seeks to create jobs and wealth, and improve the economic vitality of the region. Its priorities include technology, innovation and high-growth businesses; connected physical development; education and workforce development; and business attraction, retention and expansion. The GCP emphasizes service to its more than 16,400 members; advocacy on behalf of members and the region; diversity and inclusion; and internationalization of the region and its businesses.

Harry Minium. 2006. **"Military Lobbying Unit Gets a Unanimous Nod."** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 8).

The City Council unanimously approved funding Tuesday for a new group that will lobby to keep the region's military installations.

The group, called the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance, will fund its \$1.25 million budget with contributions from the state and 13 cities and counties in Hampton Roads.

Norfolk Mayor Paul Fraim is head of the Mayors and Chairs of Hampton Roads, which authorized the group's creation in September.

The alliance was formed in response to the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which threatened to take jets from Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach.

"That was a wake-up call for all of us," Fraim said. "The process was not supposed to be political, but instead it turned out to be a very political process. We need to be prepared."

Each city will contribute 40 cents per year per resident. Norfolk will pay \$94,080 per year. Virginia Beach will pay \$173,600. Fraim said the state is expected to contribute \$625,000.

Fraim and Newport News Mayor Joe Frank were elected chairmen of the alliance, which will operate next to the Hampton Roads Partnership office out of the World Trade Center in downtown Norfolk.

Fraim said the region's city and county managers will hire an executive director, who will then hire a lobbying firm out of Washington.

"We would have somebody at the regional level who knows more about military and federal spending and about how it all works, who got up in the morning and went to bed worrying about this, who understood who's making the decisions and when," Fraim said. "This has been received with a passion by the other cities and counties."

Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Franklin, Newport News, Hampton, Williamsburg, Poquoson and the counties of Isle of Wight, James City and York also will contribute to the alliance.

Reach Harry at (757) 446-2332 or harry.minium@pilotonline.com.

Lauren Roth. 2006. **"Budget Approved, Includes Raises for Employees, Teachers."** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 8).

The School Board adopted a \$685 million budget Tuesday that includes dozens of new full-day kindergarten classes, 30 additional contracted bus drivers and raises for all full-time employees.

The board also changed its six-year capital improvement plan to start putting aside money in 2010 to replace an aging high school.

The request, which will be sent to the City Council, dodges a \$3.8 million question. The city wants the schools to pay about half of Virginia Beach's \$7.5 million commitment toward the demands of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

The board, however, declined to include that deduction in its budget. In May, the board will see how much funding the city will give the schools.

The budget is \$82 million larger than last year's – a 13.7 percent increase.

It includes higher pension and fuel costs.

It also includes \$36 million to align two teacher pay scales and boost below-market pay for many non-instructional jobs.

The proposal would give teachers an average 7.05 percent raise, compared with 8.42 percent for other employees.

Teachers hired since 2000 have been paid on a scale more favorable to new employees. Because teachers hired earlier continued to be paid on another scale, some teachers with four years of experience were being paid as much as others with eight years of experience.

The change to a single, 30-year pay progression would result in one-time large pay increases for some teachers and small raises for others. The proposal would also boost the pay of bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, aides and others by about 11.5 percent.

A recently completed study found such workers are underpaid by about 9.5 percent to 11.2 percent, compared with the market.

Other workers would get pay increases of about 3.5 percent.

The board also plans to increase the division's contribution to health care costs by 18 percent to \$5,225 a year per worker.

The board included several initiatives to improve student transportation after a year marred by several serious bus crashes.

In addition to increasing driver pay, the schools plan to increase their stable of contracted drivers by 30 to reduce dependency on substitutes. The budget also includes money for 15 new buses and 15 driver assistants who would enforce discipline on regular-education buses.

Supporters of a new Kellam High School also got some reason to hope Tuesday. The board asked for an extra \$15 million to begin saving in 2010 for a \$99 million high school construction project.

The board did not specify which high school would be replaced, but a new Kellam was requested by three board members this year. Other projects, including several new or renovated elementary schools and an alternative education center, also are on the long-term plan.

The budget includes \$3.7 million to offer full-day kindergarten classes systemwide. Though the classes won't be at all elementary schools, at-risk students from each school will be eligible to attend. The money will pay for 29 teachers and 29 assistants.

Reach Lauren Roth at (757) 222-5133 or lauren.roth@pilotonline.com.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Assembly Briefs: Bill Would Give Say to Chesapeake on Proposed N.C. Landfill."** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 8).

Oceana, Fentress: Bills about Cities' Powers Advance

Two identical bills that give limited condemnation powers to the cities of

Chesapeake and Virginia Beach for use around Oceana Naval Air Station and Fentress Naval Auxiliary Landing Field passed through the General Assembly on Tuesday.

The bills allow the cities to follow the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission's demands to roll back and halt development around Oceana or risk losing the jets.

Virginia Beach has pledged to use condemnation as a last resort to acquire

vacant land zoned to permit houses in Accident Potential Zone 1, the area off the base where the risk of a jet crash is greatest.

Virginia Beach officials said they may have to buy about 37 acres in APZ-1. The land likely would be rendered undevelopable if the city enacts a proposed ban on new homes there, and that would require the city to compensate the property owners.

SB565, sponsored by Sen. Kenneth Stolle, R-Virginia Beach, passed the House Tuesday by a 97-1 vote. Del. Johnny Joannou, D-Portsmouth, who has pushed to limit cities' abilities to use eminent domain, cast the dissenting vote.

HB975, sponsored by Del. Terrie Suit, R-Virginia Beach, passed the Senate unanimously.

– Mike Gruss and Meghan Hoyer

Marisa Taylor. 2006. **“Council Passes Grace Period for Resort Property.”** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 8).

The City Council approved a temporary grace period Tuesday that gives resort property owners more time to seek approval of projects.

Councilman Richard Maddox proposed the measure at the request of Rick Kowalewitch, his opponent in the City Council election May 2.

Maddox said he felt property owners should have a chance to carry out plans that they began before the council adopted new resort rules on Dec. 20.

Kowalewitch, who owns an Oceanfront surf shop, wants to build a shop and condominiums on 16th Street, between Atlantic and Pacific avenues.

The issue sparked a debate about whether land owners affected by other new restrictions around Oceana Naval Air Station may also demand a grace period to get their projects built.

Under the new resort rules, Kowalewitch would have had to build offices or shops on the ground floor, instead of condos, and would have had to put parking behind the building.

He complained that it would cost millions of dollars to change his plans now.

Kowalewitch and other developers in the Resort Tourist-2 district will have until May 1 to file plans with the city under the old rules.

Mayor Meyera E. Oberndorf said the commander of Oceana Naval Air Station – Capt. Patrick J. Lorge – called her to urge the city to enforce its new rules.

Oberndorf said she was concerned the grace period would send the wrong message to the Navy, that the city was not serious about sticking to rules that would curtail development.

“It’s a test of our commitment,” she said.

“I think they’re concerned about the precedent that would be set.”

Maddox said the Navy was raising concerns without justification.

He noted that Kowalewitch wanted fewer condos than the property's zoning would allow.

"This is tantamount to meddling in a housekeeping item," Maddox said.

The grace period passed 7-3, with Oberndorf, Rosemary Wilson and Peter Schmidt dissenting.

The new resort rules updated design and zoning guidelines to encourage mixed-use development.

The council approved the rules on the same day it adopted an "overlay district" that restricts new housing in medium- and high-noise jet zones, including part of the resort.

Separately, the city crafted the overlay district in response to an ultimatum by the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which give the city and state until March 31 to control growth near the base or risk losing Oceana's jets.

Reach Marisa Taylor at (757) 222-5108 or marisa.taylor@pilotonline.com.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Sens. Johnson, Thune, Rep. Herseth Continue to Fight for Ellsworth Call Center."** US Fed News (March 7).

The office of Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., issued the following press release:

Sens. Tim Johnson and John Thune, and Rep. Stephanie Herseth today sent a letter to Secretary of the Air Force Michael Wynne expressing their strong support for the Air Force Financial Services Center (AFFSC) to be located at Ellsworth Air Force Base. The

letter highlights some of the advantages to the Air Force of locating the AFFSC at Ellsworth. In particular, the delegation letter emphasizes the abundant labor pool currently available, as well as the fact that there are at least a dozen customer financial service or telemarketing companies prospering in the Black Hills region near Ellsworth.

"Ellsworth is an ideal candidate for the AFFSC mission, and it would benefit both the Air Force and the Black Hills. Ellsworth has received over \$140 million in infrastructure improvements over the last ten years, and there's no place better to locate this mission. The delegation will continue to work to bring the AFFSC and other potential missions to Ellsworth," said Johnson.

"After having successfully gone through the BRAC process, it is apparent that Ellsworth is one of this nation's finest military bases and could accommodate additional missions," said Thune. "The AFFSC would be another mission at Ellsworth that would create good job opportunities for hundreds of families and individuals across the region. I will continue to work with the rest of the delegation to bring the AFFSC here to Ellsworth."

"It is clear that Ellsworth Air Force Base and the Black Hills region represent, together, a premier location for hosting the AFFSC. Not only is Ellsworth particularly well suited to host the mission, the region offers an unmatched labor pool and a proven tradition among financial service industry employers. Just as we made the case to remove Ellsworth from the BRAC closure list last year, the Delegation will continue to work together to make the case to improve Ellsworth's mission going forward," said Herseth.

Julianne Fisher and Joshua Rosenblum,
202/224-5842.

Justin Vellucci. 2006. **"Fort Monmouth Reuse Panel Gets Legislators' OK."**
Asbury Park (NJ) Press (March 7).

It could be just days before legislators vote on a pair of bipartisan bills that cement a foundation for the future of Fort Monmouth.

State Senate and Assembly committees Monday moved forward the identical bills, which would create a 10-member authority to direct development of the more than 1,100-acre Army post destined for closure by 2011. The Senate could vote on the bill March 13 or 20, with the Assembly possibly weighing in on March 16.

Although introduced Feb. 27, both bills gained bipartisan support and significant momentum after Gov. Corzine appeared to give the proposed authority his blessing. The measure, however, was met with mixed responses from local officials worried they'll lack the power to control massive redevelopment in their own back yards.

Tinton Falls Mayor Peter Maclearie hopes he can bring to the fray information he's gathering at a San Diego conference on base closures. While some issues remain unresolved, he wants those involved in similar situations elsewhere in the country to help improve the course New Jersey may take.

"You don't want to be at odds going forward," Maclearie said. "You want to be arm in arm."

Others, like Eatontown Councilman Theodore F. Lewis, were more pointed.

"Obviously, the state of New Jersey is determined to control this situation the way they control the Meadowlands," he said. "It's very frustrating for local officials to have no control over what's going to go on in their towns."

The tug of war between state and local control wasn't necessarily on full display Monday as Republicans and Democrats alike lauded the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Act as the best way to reuse the fort site.

"The future's not clear, (and) the best scenario would have been to keep Fort Monmouth as it was – a state-of-the-art research facility that employed tens of thousands of people," said state Sen. Joseph M. Kyrillos Jr., R-Monmouth, who co-sponsored the Senate bill with Sen. Ellen Karcher, D-Monmouth. "That argument was lost. Now, there needs to be decisions made. How do we reinvent 1,100 acres (and) 10,000 to 12,000 jobs?"

The authority, legislators stressed, may hold the answer.

"It would give us a dominant role in being able to steer the fort's future," said Assemblyman Michael Panter, D-Monmouth, primary sponsor of the Assembly bill.

The authority will direct the fort's redevelopment. It can bond for funds, appoint advisory boards and handle government and private money for development.

The authority's nine voting members will include the mayors of Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls; at least two Monmouth County residents appointed by Corzine and

one resident with business experience appointed by the Board of Freeholders; two private sector members appointed by Corzine; and the head of the state Commerce, Economic Growth and Tourism Commission. A tenth nonvoting member would be a federally appointed fort representative.

Oceanport Mayor Lucille Chaump said she believes issues of local control still linger but was pleased to see real movement to ensure a healthy economic future for the site.

"Hopefully, with all these . . . people working together on the same agenda, we should come up with a very good plan," Chaump said.

Lewis, the Eatontown councilman, remains concerned the authority doesn't give land use control to local planning boards and is ultimately run by political appointees. But legislators responded by stressing at least six of the authority's nine votes come from Monmouth County residents.

"The challenges ahead are many," Karcher said. "It will be the task of the authority to seek common ground and act in the best interests of the region."

The power of politics, however, did enter the picture Monday as Assemblyman Steve Corodemus, R-Monmouth battled to require at least one authority member to have technology or real estate experience.

Although Panter's bill requires environmental protection and labor or work force development for two of the authority members, he fought back, and the bill green-lighted by the committee said only that there would be a preference in appointments for

those with technology, finance or real estate experience.

Corodemus later said Panter's move undermined the bipartisan nature of the effort.

"We had an agreement at the governor's table," he said. "I won't be able to take the governor or the Democrats at their word when they start talking about bipartisanship. The most important thing is not the Republicans or the Democrats. It's the jobs."

Brendan Gilfillan, a Corzine spokesman, said Monday the governor was pleased the fort effort moved one step closer to reality.

"This bill appears to have the right mix of state oversight and local involvement," he said.

Kirk Moore. 2006. **"BRAC Victor Fort Dix Getting \$40M Project."** Asbury Park (NJ) Press (March 7).

A \$40.7 million project to consolidate Army Reserve units from four states here will be the biggest military construction project at Fort Dix in a generation, Rep. H. James Saxton, R-N.J., said Monday.

An estimated 1,000 full- and part-time military and civilian jobs will come here as a result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process, which resulted in major shifts to Reserve and National Guard forces.

"It's hard to clear that (jobs number) completely, because all those units are transitioning. We don't know exactly what the positions are, but at the moment that looks like the number," said Carolee Nisbet, a Fort Dix spokeswoman.

By 2007, Fort Dix will be home to a new Northeast Regional Readiness Command Headquarters that merges the headquarters units of three Army Reserve divisions.

The new 175,000-square-foot Reserve center would be built at South Scott Plaza and Maryland Avenue, near the former hospital in the main cantonment area of Fort Dix. Additional maintenance and storage buildings are part of the project too, and are slated to be built near similar facilities along Range Road.

It's likely that some of the Reserve units will transfer here before that happens. "We may have to put people in temporary facilities until construction is finished, but we've done that here before," Nisbet said.

Staffers in Saxton's office say the Reserve center will be the largest military construction project at Fort Dix in at least 25 years. In adjusted dollars, it is twice the cost of the last major civil engineering program in the mid-1990s, when Fort Dix was converting from its historic role as an active-duty Army base into a training and mobilization center for Reserve and National Guard units.

In its final report, the federal BRAC commission ordered the closure of Camp Kilmer, a vestigial Army post in Edison dating to World War II. The Army Reserve's 78th Division headquarters there will transfer to Fort Dix.

From Brooklyn, the 77th Regional Readiness Command at Fort Totten will move to Fort Dix and be converted to a "maneuver enhancement brigade" with the mission of aiding training functions on the 31,000-acre reservation straddling Ocean and Burlington counties.

From Coraopolis, Pa., the 99th Regional Readiness Command at the Pittsburgh-area Reserve center will move to Fort Dix. Helicopter aviation units based at Coraopolis are likewise coming to New Jersey, along with the Army Reserve 244th Aviation Brigade now at Fort Sheridan, Ill. The consolidations will bring dozens more aircraft to Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station, which will be managed together under Air Force administration.

Doug Abrahms. 2006. **"State National Guard in Battle over Budget."** Gannett News Service (March 7).

National Guard officials and the Bush administration are sparring again over funding, although the threat of losing transport airplanes does not hover over Nevada as it did during last year's base-closing process.

Governors and state National Guard officials want the Bush administration to boost the guard's manpower by 5 percent this year, but they also worry about a possible equipment shortage, said Nevada Adjutant General Cindy Kirkland. For example, the Nevada National Guard's 1864th medium truck company based in Henderson returned from Iraq this fall but had 60 trucks and 120 trailers left behind, she said.

"They will have no equipment to continue training," she said. "It's going to be tough to keep those kids around when they're just sitting around the guardrails with nothing to do."

Kirkland was in Washington last week attending meetings about the Pentagon's

plans to restructure the guard. She said it was hard to determine how Nevada would be affected. Additionally, an independent commission set up by Congress to assess the role, missions and training of guard and reserves starts work Wednesday.

The tussle started last month when President Bush included funding in next year's budget for only 333,000 members of the National Guard, rather than 350,000 that was authorized by Congress. Gov. Kenny Guinn and 49 other governors signed a letter last month urging Bush to fund the increase in the national guard, which is being stretched between missions in Iraq, disaster responses and homeland security duties, they said.

White House officials and the Pentagon maintain the guard's manpower will grow, but they want to change the overall structure.

"The National Guard is not being cut," Gen. Peter Schoomaker, Army chief of staff, told a House defense subcommittee last month. "We are committed to 350,000 end strength in the National Guard."

Additionally, the administration is seeking \$21 billion for National Guard equipment – about four times the amount that was spent between 1999 and 2005, he said.

Guinn said last week that he was confident the White House would increase the National Guard in states that could meet their recruitment levels, which includes Nevada. Nevada Army Guard has 2,281 soldiers – 105 percent of its authorized troop size. The Air Guard stands at 1,107 soldiers – 95 percent of its recruitment goal.

Despite deployments to Iraq, the state's National Guard can still handle wildfires,

homeland security or other emergencies, Guinn said.

"In Nevada, I think we're well prepared with the number we have, even right now," he said.

Friction between the states and Washington over National Guard funding has always existed, said Loren Thompson, a military analyst at the Lexington Institute, an Arlington, Va., think tank. But the states feel more emboldened because they were able to persuade the base closing commission last summer to remove a number of military installations from the base-closure list recommended by the Pentagon, he said.

That commission removed the Hawthorne Army Depot from the "to- close" list, and it allowed the Nevada Air National Guard to keep its eight C-130 transport planes that the Pentagon wanted to move.

Governors also see that since the Defense Department's budget is more than \$500 billion, the National Guard should get more money, Thompson said.

"It would be fair to say that the governors have gotten the attention of both the White House and the Pentagon," he said.

Kirkland said the state guard can keep up with both its homeland- security and disaster-response missions. But the war in Iraq is straining the guard's manpower and equipment.

The Nevada Air Guard rotates one C-130 plane at a time to and from Iraq every 60 to 120 days to limit the amount of sand damage to the plane, she said. Otherwise, the unit risks losing the plane and not getting a replacement, she said.

“We agree that there’s a huge price tag that needs to be paid” for the war in Iraq, Kirkland said. “We just think there’s other solutions than cutting the force structure as they have suggested.”

—
Contact Doug Abrahms at
dabrahms(AT)gns.gannett.com.

Carol Comegno. 2006. “**New Fort Dix Facility Planned.**” Courier-Post (Camden, NJ) (March 7): 1B.

\$40.7 Million Would Fund Reserve
Command Center

The U.S. Army Reserve on Monday announced it will build a \$40.7 million Reserve Command Center here.

The announcement came through U.S. Rep. Jim Saxton, R-Mount Holly, who called the project the largest built at the Army post in decades.

More than half of the 1,000 soldiers and civilians who will occupy the new administrative and training facility will be from outside Fort Dix.

Those jobs are being transferred to Fort Dix from other installations as part of a decision by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission last year, Saxton said.

The commission decided to combine Fort Dix and adjacent McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station into a megabase.

“This is the largest construction project I have ever seen at Fort Dix in modern

history,” said Saxton, a ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee.

“Ultimately this project will consolidate Army Reserve missions around the country and . . . save money.”

The center was part of the BRAC decision and will be made up of three buildings, including a 175,000-square-foot main building, said Carolee Nisbet, a spokeswoman for Fort Dix.

The reserve’s 78th Division headquarters from Camp Kilmer in Edison will occupy part of the main building, which will be built on South Scott Plaza near Seaver Avenue.

Funds already are in the approved 2006 defense budget for implementation of BRAC recommendations, Saxton said.

The reserve command designs and monitors battle training exercises for troops.

Bids could be taken for the project within months, and the building could be ready by late 2007, Saxton said.

Fort Dix has been training reserve and National Guard soldiers for Operation Iraqi Freedom, the global war on terrorism and Operation Noble Eagle, the Defense Department’s homeland security missions.

Reach Carol Comegno at (609) 267-9486 or ccomegno@courierpostonline.com

Unattributed. 2006. “**DOD Defends Market-Based BRAC Rule from Cleanup Concerns.**” Defense Environment Alert 14/5 (March 7).

The Defense Department is defending itself against charges that its new cleanup and property disposal process for the 2005 BRAC round focuses too much on saving DOD money and not enough on community input or cleanup, claiming the rule reflects statutory changes enacted since 1995, according to a final BRAC rule released last week.

But at least one critic says the final rule fails to answer concerns critics raised about the draft version, underscoring the general belief that DOD has shifted its focus from economic development and cleanup at BRAC sites to a profit-driven approach.

Local governments, BRAC property redevelopers and communities largely criticized DOD's draft version of the BRAC revitalization rule last year, asserting it espoused policies aimed at maximizing DOD's financial return from BRAC property sales and failed to commit to aggressive cleanup at the sites (Defense Environment Alert, Oct. 18, 2005, p6; Nov. 1, 2005, p6). The rule updates regulations that applied to earlier BRAC rounds.

The rule calls for quick closure to speed community reuse of properties, full use of an array of legal authorities to transfer property, reliance on market forces in property conveyances and collaboration with communities on closure and redevelopment.

Many of the concerns expressed by commenters on the draft rule relate to changes made in response to base closure law amendments, DOD says in the final rule, published in the Federal Register Feb. 28. "Many of the most contentious provisions in the rule, judging from the comments, actually represent language taken almost verbatim from the base closure laws."

DOD assures in the preamble to the final rule that it "does not see the disposal process as a 'zero-sum' arrangement." It cites numerous goals Congress established for implementing the BRAC law, including intentions "to ensure a meaningful role for local communities in planning the reuse of the installations. . . promote job generation at closing facilities, require appropriate and timely environmental remediation, and recoup the taxpayers' investment in installations."

But an official with the National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals (NALGEP), which heavily criticized the draft rule, says that despite assurances in the preamble, there is no question that DOD is minimizing environmental cleanup obligations. NALGEP had urged DOD to include a commitment to clean up to levels that protect the environment and public health – a call DOD rejected, the source says. The final rule "reinforces the perception that BRAC is a profit-driven, real estate transaction rather than an opportunity to use these facilities to promote economic development," the source says.

But one BRAC consultant is applauding DOD's move toward gearing the process toward more sophisticated buyers who are expected to practice "due diligence" when reviewing a property for a potential purchase.

DOD received 31 sets of comments from a variety of entities. Commenters such as the Association of Defense Communities – BRAC property redevelopers – NALGEP, and the Center for Public Environmental Oversight – a military environmental watchdog group – urged DOD to revise its

regulation. The rule is available on InsideEPA.com.

The department in the final rule refutes the commenters' claims that the regulation was aimed at maximizing the military's monetary return, rather than supporting economic recovery through property transfers to local communities. "Promoting monetary return to the Department for use either at the particular location or at other locations and rapid property transfer to encourage job generation are not mutually exclusive," the final rule says.

DOD says the rule, unlike previous regulations, "does not give any particular preference to one form of disposal over another."

The issue also surfaced at a congressional hearing. DOD environment chief Philip Grone was asked by Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-HI) at a Senate hearing March 2 about providing assurances that BRAC land disposal decisions will benefit local communities. Grone replied, "DOD will not dictate the disposal method of BRAC property," but such decisions will be handled on a case-specific basis by the services, keeping legal obligations in mind.

Even before the draft rule was proposed, DOD began pushing the sale of base closure property, which in turn helps pay for cleanups. The rule calls for greater consideration of obtaining fair-market value for closed property, in light of the statutory changes. The BRAC law amendments eliminated the stated preference for no-cost or low-cost economic development conveyances (EDCs), DOD says. Under EDCs, DOD conveys properties to local redevelopment authorities as a way to create new jobs to address the economic impacts of closures and realignment.

The rule's conformance to these statutory changes "does not represent an effort by the Department to seek greater monetary return," the rule says. "It simply represents the Department's effort to conform its rule to the statute."

Many commenters also questioned the cleanup policy created under the rule. The rule should commit DOD to remediating to expected future land use – by adopting cleanup levels outlined in the local redevelopment plan – and should articulate fundamental environmental policies such as committing to perform all necessary cleanup to protect environment and public health, commenters said. They also stressed the need to integrate cleanup with property disposal and redevelopment plans, which would speed property transfers and local economic recovery.

But DOD in the final rule says the cleanup standards it follows – in Superfund law and its regulatory counterpart, the National Contingency Plan – include consideration of expected future land use when determining cleanup standards.

Also, DOD says it recognizes the importance of integrating cleanup with property disposal and land reuse planning. "Cleanup standards are tied to future land use," and are set pursuant to Superfund law. "Future land use is informed by the property disposal plan. As stated earlier, the local redevelopment plan is a basis for any proposed Federal action. Therefore, the redevelopment planning, property disposal, and environmental cleanup are integrated," the rule says.

DOD also defends its policy on transferring un-remediated property to other federal agencies, despite concerns expressed by

several commenters. These commenters “objected to the requirement that other Federal agencies accept any excess property in its existing condition, viewing this as a burden on their resources or an attempt by [the] Department to avoid its cleanup responsibilities,” the rule says.

But DOD notes that other agencies must have the resources to “accept” the property they are seeking and must pay fair market value, which could include a reduced price in light of any contamination. Nonetheless, it says the requirement does not alter the United States’ liability for cleanup at such sites.

DOD also defends the rule’s delegation of authority from DOD down to the services to interpret property disposal rules and make final decisions on community issues. Commenters feared this would leave the Office of the Secretary of Defense out of the process and hamper uniform decision-making among these sites. But DOD says the responsibility shift is consistent with other delegations within the department. “The delegation language in the rule is actually somewhat less broad than the language it will be replacing,” it notes.

In response to a concern over language on explosive safety hazards, DOD says it will change the rule accordingly. While the rule would allow the submission of an explosives safety plan prior to property transfer, it would not first require approval of the plan by the DOD Explosives Safety Board, one commenter had said. DOD concedes the rule’s language should be clarified to reflect that the standard practice of the services is “to wait on actual approval of the plan before proceeding to transfer property,” the rule says.

DOD plans to soon publish an updated Base Redevelopment and Realignment Manual as a complementary document to the rule, according to the final regulation.

Staff. 2006. “**Oceana’s Future.**” The Richmond (VA) Times-Dispatch (February 12): F2.

The latest word on Oceana suggests Virginia Beach has not moved aggressively enough to satisfy federal conditions for keeping the Naval Air Station where it is. Late last month Gordon England, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, wrote Senator John Warner to the effect that the Department’s inspector general feels the steps Virginia Beach has taken “may not fully address” federal concerns as defined by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Virginia Beach’s plan limits development in the crash zones around the base runways. The council would use the power of eminent domain to take vacant property if the owners refuse to sell - but it would not seek to raze existing homes and businesses. BRAC has demanded that Virginia Beach clear 3,400 homes and businesses from the primary crash zones. England’s letter to Warner suggests the Beach must do more than it has proposed.

At this point, three things need to happen.

First, Virginia Beach needs to review its plans in light of the new information contained in England’s letter.

Second, the General Assembly needs to consider using some of the current state budget surplus to help Virginia Beach compensate property owners who might be asked to move in order to retain Oceana.

Legislative leaders have insisted they want to use the surplus for one-time needs, not recurring programs. Keeping Oceana in Virginia qualifies as both a one-timer and definitely desirable.

Third, the Pentagon needs to stop playing footsie with the Commonwealth and stipulate precisely what it wants, and - short of that - precisely what will suffice. It also should stipulate what the long-range plan for Oceana is. There have been intimations that Oceana might be mothballed down the line no matter what the Beach or the Commonwealth does. If this is so, then that obviously would rank as a significant factor in determining what further steps, if any, Virginia and Virginia Beach take.

The fate of Oceana will affect not only Virginia Beach and the Old Dominion, but the Navy and major portions of the East Coast. Both the Commonwealth and the country deserve a clearer idea of where the issue stands - and soon.

Bill Geroux. 2006. **"Residents Oppose Plan for Jet Field."** The Richmond (VA) Times-Dispatch (February 9): B1.

In N.C. Community, Some Fear Disruption of Wildlife, Way of Life

The Navy wants to build a practice field for F/A-18 Super Hornet jets in remote Washington County chiefly because it is nothing like the jets' hometown of Virginia Beach.

The county, located on a peninsula jutting into Albemarle and Pamlico sounds, is free of suburban sprawl, and even of suburbs. It is a poor, sparsely populated farming community, dotted with hamlets bearing

names like Wenona and Scuppernong, and dominated by the swampy Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge.

The nights are so dark there, the Navy says, that pilots could realistically simulate night landings on aircraft carriers in the middle of the ocean.

But for all its remoteness, Washington County has a distinctive rhythm of life, which is stubbornly resisting the Navy's efforts to alter it.

An alliance of local landowners and national conservation groups has temporarily halted construction of the airfield with a federal lawsuit, arguing that Navy's fast, loud Super Hornets would play havoc with the hundreds of thousands of migratory swans and geese that spend the winter in the Pocosin refuge. Opponents of the airfield warn that midair collisions between the jets and the hefty tundra swans and snow geese would be inevitable.

But even the most ardent of the county's defenders agreed this week that environmental lawsuits probably can do little more than

delay the Navy's plans for its Outlying Landing Field.

They said their only real hope is in an argument that is more basic, and political in nature: that the Navy should not be allowed to export the Super Hornets' rock-concert noise levels and disruptive presence to one of North Carolina's poorest counties, seizing land from some families that have farmed there for generations.

"I'll fight this with everything I can," declared 82-year-old Martha Askew, who said the Navy wants to take most of a 715-

acre farm her family carved out of the landscape by cutting trees, pulling stumps and draining swamp water. One of her neighbors, Jeanine Saunders, produced what she said was her family's original 18th-century land grant from King George II.

Military facilities typically are economic-development machines, bringing jobs and investment of defense dollars. But the Navy's proposed practice field will bring nothing except noise and disruption, said Washington County Manager David Peoples. "Unfortunately, this has the opportunity to change a culture and a way of life."

The airfield would remove 33,000 acres from the county's modest tax rolls, while eliminating roughly 250 farm jobs and hurting the region's chance of attracting industry to replace them, Peoples said. The county's largest employer, a Weyerhaeuser paper plant, has pared nearly 40 percent of its work force over the past three years.

Peoples and other local officials have asked the Navy to build the field in some other remote corner of North Carolina - possibly near the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point, which is due to receive two new squadrons of Super Hornets.

A federal court has ordered the Navy to re-examine the Washington County site along with several others it previously rejected, and Ted Brown, a spokesman for the Navy's U.S. Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk, said the Navy is doing so. But he said the Washington County site "is still our preferred alternative."

"We certainly understand the position of people who oppose it," Brown said, "but we'd ask them to be patient and understanding. Our pilots need and deserve

the highest-quality training we can provide for them."

Most of those pilots are based at Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach, which in the past decade has grown into the Navy's main East Coast jet base - the home to roughly 250 carrier-based fighter jets. As Oceana has grown, the suburbs of Virginia Beach and neighboring Chesapeake have spread to the fringes of the air base and its auxiliary, Fentress Field.

The Navy says the encroachment has forced pilots to tailor their flight paths to cut down on noise complaints, and that the increasing ambient light in the area makes it hard for pilots to train properly for night carrier landings at sea - probably the most dangerous task they have to perform.

Since 2001, the Navy has been evaluating sites for a new remote landing strip where pilots from Oceana and Cherry Point could practice maneuvers known as "touch and goes" - in which pilots practice touching down their planes in a painted box the size of a carrier's landing zone, then quickly climb and circle back around for additional tries. "Touch and goes" are loud.

The Navy said it studied 27 prospective sites, including two in Virginia, before settling in September 2003 on the Washington County spot, which is roughly halfway between Oceana and Cherry Point. Brown said pilots from Oceana and Cherry Point would conduct roughly 16,000 "touch-and-goes" per year at the site - an average of 44 per day, though the number would vary according to the Navy's needs. The drills often would take place at night.

The proposed site is about 5 miles from the western edge of the 110,000-acre Pocosin Lakes wildlife refuge, the wintering grounds

for more than 100,000 tundra swans, snow geese and other birds, many of which migrate as far north as Alaska and Greenland.

A long list of environmental and conservation groups, including the Audubon Society of North Carolina and the Defenders of Wildlife, argue the Navy would invite disaster by mingling its "birds" with the vast flocks of waterfowl swirling unpredictably around the refuge six months of every year.

"The Navy recognizes there are a lot of birds" at the Pocosin refuge, Brown said, "But we have a lot of experience dealing with that."

The Navy is confident it can control the birds' movements by replacing crops they like to eat, such as corn and winter wheat, with cotton and tobacco, Brown said. At some air bases, he said, the military has deployed border collies to flush birds from areas near flight operations.

The Navy produced an environmental-impact statement saying the airfield would have a minimal impact on birds and other wildlife in Washington County. But last February, a federal judge in Raleigh found that conclusion "arbitrary and capricious" and ordered the Navy to conduct more studies before going any further.

Brown said the Navy hopes to complete its studies and make a final decision by spring 2007.

Chris Canfield, executive director of the North Carolina office of the National Audubon Society, expressed little hope Tuesday that the Navy would willingly pick a different site. He said the only strategy available to opponents was "delaying as long as possible the actual construction of

the [practice field] until something shifts - militarily, politically, an act of God, I don't know."

Several farmers said they had given no thought to what they would do if the Navy prevailed. "If I would consider that, I think it would be like I was giving up," said Jerry Beasley. "I don't have a Plan B."

But he may need one.

Mayor Brian Roth of Plymouth, the seat of government in Washington County, said opponents have struggled to marshal political support at high levels. The area's congressman and several state legislators have been supportive, he said, but the group has heard little from Gov. Michael F. Easley or North Carolina's U.S. senators, Elizabeth Dole and Richard M. Burr, both Republicans.

Roth read part of a recent letter from Burr saying the senator did not feel he could "dictate" where the Navy should build the field.

But the mayor said political leaders seldom hesitate to lobby the military about where to locate facilities rich in jobs or defense dollars, as the most recent round of military base-closings showed. Only when the military wants to dump an undesirable facility such as the practice range do those leaders seem to defer to the courts or "the experts," Roth said.

Contact staff writer Bill Geroux at wgeroux@timesdispatch.com or (757) 625-1358.

Peter Hardin. 2006. **"Lawmakers Urge Meeting over Oceana."** The Richmond (VA) Times-Dispatch (February 9): B4.

A kind of diplomatic minuet continued yesterday over the future of Oceana Naval Air Station, as Virginia lawmakers met with Pentagon officials.

One outcome of the private session may be a meeting soon between state and local officials and the Defense Department.

Sen. John W. Warner, R-Va. and chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said he was drafting a letter to state and local officials recommending that they accept an offer from the Pentagon's inspector general to meet.

The topic would be action that Virginia Beach and the state will take in response to an independent base-closing commission's recommendations, Warner said.

The commission ordered Virginia Beach to take steps to roll back development in Oceana's primary crash zones or give up its Navy jet squadrons and 12,000 jobs.

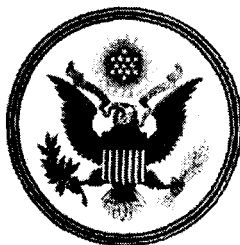
Gordon England, the deputy secretary of defense, said in a letter to Warner last month that the inspector general expressed concern that a plan adopted by the Virginia Beach City Council may not satisfy the federal government.

The inspector general was put in charge of determining whether Virginia Beach acts by March 31 in a way that complies with the commission's recommendations. Yesterday's meeting also involved Rep. Thelma Drake, R-2nd, and Sen. George Allen, R-Va.

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Staff. 2006. **"Ready or Not, Here They Come!"** Northwest Florida Daily News (Fort Walton Beach, FL) (March 5).

Since the BRAC boom became known, Air Force officials and local planners have warned that more roads will be needed to keep Okaloosa County's population moving. Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Riemer, the Air Armament Center's new commander, was pressing the issue again last month. "The roads, the infrastructure, the water, sewage treatment, you name it ... our infrastructure needs to be sized to keep pace with that growth," Maj. Gen. Riemer said at a breakfast sponsored by Okaloosa's Economic Development Council. If you'll pardon the analogy, the general and other forward-thinking officials have a bumpy road ahead. It's not just that securing funds for road widening, road building and other transportation improvements will be difficult. The real problem is that a great many area residents, and a great many politicians whose ears they bend, resist almost any kind of road work.

Witness the long, loud and bitter fight over whether to build another bridge from Fort Walton Beach to Okaloosa Island. County officials say their file cabinets bulge with plans for road work -- bridges, bypasses, overpasses, traffic circles -- that were studied, debated and then abandoned because of public opposition. Some of this work is opposed because the new road, bypass or whatever would encroach on state or federal land, which certain folks believe should be forever offlimits to asphalt. Some of it is opposed because the road work would impact an existing neighborhood. There would be more traffic. Homes might have to be relocated. And some of it is opposed simply because residents think more roads will bring more people, and they don't want more people. A reader gave voice to this fear in our Feb. 19 "Spout Off" column: "Improving roads and building bridges and condos only entices more people. Remember, 'If you build it, they will come.' " Here's the catch: They're coming anyway. The base realignment process will bring at least 12,000 new residents, perhaps as many as 20,000, to Okaloosa County over the next five years. And that's on top of this area's normal growth and each summer's surge of tourists. They're coming whether our roads and water systems are ready or not. We know that some folks draw an odd distinction: Government growth is OK but private-sector growth isn't. But even that line is blurring. Check out a reader's complaint from last week: "How could anybody oppose building a new bridge and new roads when they should be opposing the thousands of new military personnel who are coming?" Sorry, but it looks as if "opposing the thousands of new military personnel" will be like opposing the sunrise. Same goes for tourism, new births, non-military jobs and the myriad other factors that boost our population. Growth happens. Sometimes, a

lot of it happens quickly. It's best to be ready.

Susan McDonough. **"Oak Knoll Neighbors Chime In."** The Oakland (CA) Tribune (March 4).

Neighbors have been kept off much of the grounds of the Oak Knoll Naval Hospital in the southern Oakland hills since the U.S. Navy abandoned the property in 1996.

But with the locks coming off and developers with mysterious, multimillion-dollar plans moving in, one thing is certain: Plenty of people have plenty to say about what is done with the shady, 167-acre property with sweeping views of San Francisco Bay.

Developer SunCal Cos. met with neighbors in the Oakland hills Thursday during the first of three public meetings planned to discuss redevelopment of the land, closed in 1993 during one of the first rounds of federal base closures nationwide.

The 6 p.m. meeting was at capacity; organizers had to ask stragglers to wait outside the Oakland Zoo Snow building until wiggle room opened up inside.

Neighbors from both sides of Interstate 580 listened while developers talked about the history and layout of the property, which fell through several hands before SunCal purchased it for \$100.5 million in November.

"This is not going to be a project. It's not going to be a housing subdivision. It's going to be a community," Peter Calthrope, a well-known urban planner hired by SunCal to

design Oak Knoll, told the group of more than 200 people.

Calthrope said he was not going to pretend the company did not have its own ideas for the property, but he promised to listen to neighbors' suggestions.

"They want to be heard, and we want to hear them," Pat Keliher, project manager for the Oak Knoll site, said later in an interview.

Calthrope promised that neighborhoods would be built for people, not automobiles. As examples, he showed slides of other projects with garages in the rear and houses built around grassy courtyards instead of paved cul-de-sacs.

The master plan would respect the character of the land cut with creeks and steep hillsides. Builders would not come in and level things, he said.

And there would be a range of house styles, from lower-priced bungalows to expensive, live-work spaces, as well as affordable housing.

For the most part, neighbors seemed to like what they heard, and they gave SunCal high marks for its public planning process.

"The proof will be in the pudding to see if our input is actually adopted," said Mark White, a local homeowner.

Neighbors told developers they want Rifle Range Creek, which the Navy built over in spots, restored. They want open spaces and walking trails with "pooper-scooper stations," a village center with specialty shops, a public library, a sports field and schools.

"No big-box stores," and "no rental units" were popular sentiments expressed by the group.

Barbara Bray, who has lived in the Sequoyah Hills Oak Knoll neighborhood for 30 years, said she would like to see a Cold Stone Creamery on the property.

When people shouted out "Emeryville" and "Berkeley" as suggested locations, she said, "I want to shop in Oakland," and people applauded.

Bray said neighbors are leery of developers who in the past have proposed a gambling casino, a homeless shelter and a golf course * things they considered inappropriate * for the land.

"It took a long time and didn't work," she said.

The city of Oakland originally offered the Navy \$2 million for the land and increased its offer to \$11 million in 2002, which the Navy rejected.

In an auction later, St. Paul Baptist Church of Oakland placed a winning bid of

\$22.5 million for the property. The church struggled to come up with the initial \$2.25 million down payment and failed to pay the rest of the tab by deadline, so it lost its claim to the property.

The property has sat empty for so long, Bray said, she is happy somebody is finally moving in.

SunCal, she said, "seems honorable."

SunCal expects to present a preliminary plan for the property based on neighbors'

comments at a second public meeting scheduled for late March.

Staff. **"Anteon Providing ONR Program Management Services."** Aerospace Daily & Defense Report 217/41 (March 3): 4.

The U.S. Navy has chosen Anteon International Corp. for a \$15.8 million, five-year contract to support the Office of Naval Research's Marine Corps science and technology programs, the company said Feb. 28.

The award from ONR's department for Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare and Combating Terrorism and the Office of the Vice Chief of Naval Research calls for Anteon to provide program management, engineering, and analytical and financial management services focusing on C4ISR, mine countermeasures, logistics, human performance, training, survivability, maneuver and firepower.

Fairfax, Va.-based Anteon will provide its services to the department at its offices in Arlington, Va. ONR and other defense research agencies recently were kept in Arlington after the Bush administration recommended consolidating them as part of the 2005 base closure and realignment process (DAILY, Aug. 29, 2005).

Chris Collins. 2006. **"Airport Gets Boose From Supervisors."** The Modesto (CA) Bee (March 3): B1.

Merced County OKs Redevelopment Plan for Castle's Airfield

With no fanfare and zero comment from the public, a massive redevelopment plan for Castle Airport was approved after months of delays.

Mike Nelson, chairman of the Merced County Board of Supervisors, put it all in perspective.

"Congratulations, Mr. Fowler, you're finally making some progress," he told John Fowler, head of the Commerce, Aviation and Economic Development Department, after the unanimous vote Tuesday.

The 30-year plan is based on a 1996 report that suggests Castle be used primarily as a "major aircraft maintenance facility and aircraft maintenance training center."

It aims to transform 1,700 acres of the old Air Force base into an educational, industrial and commercial hot zone.

The plan would spruce up the airstrip, which is the fourth-largest in the state and try to attract more air traffic.

The board's OK puts the county in a better position to acquire the airport, which still is owned by the Air Force. It will siphon thousands of tax dollars each year toward revitalization efforts, said Castle Redevelopment Coordinator Tracy Pisacco.

Though the county will get less than \$20,000 this year to invest in Castle, it will receive bigger chunks of property taxes in the future as more people buy and lease buildings and land at Castle, she said.

The county has the option of using those funds to take out up to \$1.1 billion in loans, though Pisacco said it's unlikely the county would borrow that much money.

Fowler said the plan gives the county a tool "so we can get on with fixing what we need to fix."

He cautioned, however, that it would be about seven or eight years before any significant improvements are made. He said he wasn't sure where the first big changes would occur.

"It's aviation, it's commercial, it's industrial, it's educational," he said. "You never know which one we will need to assist first."

When Nelson was asked whether he thought the county would take out any loans to help redevelopment, he said: "I'm not a fortuneteller."

In the next five years, the county probably will have to spend more than \$300,000 on reviving Castle's airport facilities, according to a consultant's report released last year.

The report suggests that the county should put money toward incentive programs for potential investors and spend money on cleaning up environmental problems.

A vote on the revitalization effort stalled last year when the county failed to adequately publicize a public hearing.

A hearing and vote on the plan was rescheduled to late January, but a letter arrived at the last second objecting to the plan and delayed the vote.

Nelson said the setbacks slowed the process but were not a "major impediment."

Since the base closed in 1995, about 60 structures at Castle have been demolished. Of the 125 remaining, 50 or so are slated for destruction.

Fowler wants to tear down many of the half-century-old buildings because they are moldy or in disrepair.

The county has attracted two flight schools and a handful of businesses to the airport.

Fowler said he has received "very steady interest" from businesses that want to use the land, though he wouldn't say which companies are looking at Castle.

Charles J. Hanley. 2006. **"Iraq Future Bases."** Associated Press Newswires (March 19, 19:33).

Editor's Note – This report is based on interviews with U.S. military engineers and others before and during the writer's two weeks as an embedded reporter at major U.S. bases in Iraq.

Balad Air Base, Iraq (AP) – The concrete goes on forever, vanishing into the noonday glare, 2 million cubic feet (60,000 cubic meters) of it, a mile-(1.6-kilometer)long slab that's now the home of up to 120 U.S. helicopters, a "heli-park" as good as any back in the States.

At another giant base, al-Asad in Iraq's western desert, the 17,000 troops and workers come and go in a kind of bustling American town, with a Burger King, Pizza Hut and a car dealership, stop signs, traffic regulations and young bikers clogging the roads.

At a third hub down south, Tallil, they're planning a new mess hall, one that will seat 6,000 hungry airmen and soldiers for chow.

Are the Americans here to stay? Air Force mechanic Josh Remy is sure of it as he looks around Balad.

"I think we'll be here forever," the 19-year-old airman told a visitor to his base.

The Iraqi people suspect the same. Strong majorities tell pollsters they'd like to see a timetable for U.S. troops to leave, but believe Washington plans to keep military bases in their country.

The question of America's future in Iraq looms larger as the U.S. military enters the fourth year of its war here, waged first to oust President Saddam Hussein, and now to crush an Iraqi insurgency.

Ibrahim al-Jaafari, interim prime minister, has said he opposes permanent foreign bases. A wide range of American opinion is against them as well. Such bases would be a "stupid" provocation, says Gen. Anthony Zinni, former U.S. Mideast commander and a critic of the original U.S. invasion.

But events, in explosive situations like Iraq's, can turn "no" into "maybe" and even "yes."

The Shiite Muslims, ascendant in Baghdad, might decide they need long-term U.S. protection against insurgent Sunni Muslims. Washington might take the political risks to gain a strategic edge – in its confrontation with next-door Iran, for example.

The U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, and other U.S. officials disavow any desire for permanent bases. But long-term access, as at other U.S. bases abroad, is different from "permanent," and the official U.S. position is carefully worded.

Lt. Cmdr. Joe Carpenter, a Pentagon spokesman on international security, told The Associated Press it would be "inappropriate" to discuss future basing until a new Iraqi government is in place, expected in the coming weeks.

Less formally, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, asked about "permanent duty stations" by a Marine during an Iraq visit in December, allowed that it was "an interesting question." He said it would have to be raised by the incoming Baghdad government, if "they have an interest in our assisting them for some period over time."

In Washington, Iraq scholar Phebe Marr finds the language intriguing. "If they aren't planning for bases, they ought to say so," she said. "I would expect to hear 'No bases.'"

Right now what is heard is the pouring of concrete.

In 2005-06, Washington has authorized or proposed almost US\$1 billion (euro820 million) for U.S. military construction in Iraq, as American forces consolidate at Balad, known as Anaconda, and a handful of other installations, big bases under the old regime.

They have already pulled out of 34 of the 110 bases they were holding last March, said Maj. Lee English of the U.S. command's Base Working Group, planning the consolidation.

"The coalition forces are moving outside the cities while continuing to provide security support to the Iraqi security forces," English said.

The move away from cities, perhaps eventually accompanied by U.S. force

reductions, will lower the profile of U.S. troops, frequent targets of roadside bombs on city streets. Officers at Al-Asad Air Base, 10 desert miles (16 kilometers) from the nearest town, say it hasn't been hit by insurgent mortar or rocket fire since October.

Al-Asad will become even more isolated. The proposed 2006 supplemental budget for Iraq operations would provide US\$7.4 million (euro6 million) to extend the no-man's-land and build new security fencing around the base, which at 19 square miles is so large that many assigned there take the Yellow or Blue bus routes to get around the base, or buy bicycles at a PX jammed with customers.

The latest budget also allots US\$39 million (euro32 million) for new airfield lighting, air traffic control systems and upgrades allowing al-Asad to plug into the Iraqi electricity grid – a typical sign of a long-term base.

At Tallil, besides the new US\$14 million (euro11.5 million) dining facility, Ali Air Base is to get, for US\$22 million (euro18 million), a double perimeter security fence with high-tech gate controls, guard towers and a moat – in military parlance, a “vehicle entrapment ditch with berm.”

Here at Balad, the former Iraqi air force academy 40 miles (64 kilometers) north of Baghdad, the two 12,000-foot (3,600-meter) runways have become the logistics hub for all U.S. military operations in Iraq, and major upgrades began last year.

Army engineers say 31,000 truckloads of sand and gravel fed nine concrete-mixing plants on Balad, as contractors laid a US\$16 million (euro13 million) ramp to park the Air Force's huge C-5 cargo planes; a US\$18

million (euro15 million) ramp for workhorse C-130 transports; and the vast, US\$28 million (euro23 million) main helicopter ramp, the length of 13 football fields, filled with attack, transport and reconnaissance helicopters.

Turkish builders are pouring tons more concrete for a fourth ramp beside the runways, for medical-evacuation and other aircraft on alert. And US\$25 million (euro20.5 million) was approved for other “pavement projects,” from a special road for munitions trucks to a compound for special forces.

The chief Air Force engineer here, Lt. Col. Scott Hoover, is also overseeing two crucial projects to add to Balad's longevity: equipping the two runways with new permanent lighting, and replacing a weak 3,500-foot (1,050-meter) section of one runway.

Once that's fixed, “we're good for as long as we need to run it,” Hoover said. Ten years? he was asked. “I'd say so.”

Away from the flight lines, among traffic jams and freshly planted palms, life improves on 14-square-mile Balad for its estimated 25,000 personnel, including several thousand American and other civilians.

They've inherited an Olympic-sized pool and a chandeliered cinema from the Iraqis. They can order their favorite Baskin-Robbins flavor at ice cream counters in five dining halls, and cut-rate Fords, Chevys or Harley-Davidsons, for delivery at home, at a PX-run “dealership.” On one recent evening, not far from a big 24-hour gym, airmen hustled up and down two full-length, lighted outdoor basketball courts as F-16 fighters thundered home overhead.

"Balad's a fantastic base," Brig. Gen. Frank Gorenc, the Air Force's tactical commander in Iraq, said in an interview at his headquarters here.

Could it host a long-term U.S. presence?

"Eventually it could," said Gorenc, commander of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing. "But there's no commitment to any of the bases we operate, until somebody tells me that."

In the counterinsurgency fight, Balad's central location enables strike aircraft to reach targets in minutes. And in the broader context of reinforcing the U.S. presence in the oil-rich Mideast, Iraq bases are preferable to aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf, said a longtime defense analyst.

"Carriers don't have the punch," said Gordon Adams of Washington's George Washington University. "There's a huge advantage to land-based infrastructure. At the level of strategy it makes total sense to have Iraq bases."

A U.S. congressional study cited another, less discussed use for possible Iraq bases: to install anti-ballistic defenses in case Iran fires missiles.

American bases next door could either deter or provoke Iran, noted Paul D. Hughes, a key planner in the early U.S. occupation of Iraq.

Overall, however, this retired Army colonel says American troops are unwanted in the Middle East. With long-term bases in Iraq, "We'd be inviting trouble," Hughes said.

"It's a stupid idea and clearly politically unacceptable," Zinni, a former Central

Command chief, said in a Washington interview. "It would damage our image in the region, where people would decide that this" – seizing bases – "was our original intent."

Among Iraqis, the subject is almost too sensitive to discuss.

"People don't like bases," veteran politician Adnan Pachachi, a member of the new Parliament, told the AP. "If bases are absolutely necessary, if there's a perceived threat ... but I don't think even Iran will be a threat."

If long-term basing is, indeed, on the horizon, "the politics back here and the politics in the region say, 'Don't announce it,'" Adams said in Washington. That's what's done elsewhere, as with the quiet U.S. basing of spy planes and other aircraft in the United Arab Emirates.

Army and Air Force engineers, with little notice, have worked to give U.S. commanders solid installations in Iraq, and to give policymakers options. From the start, in 2003, the first Army engineers rolling into Balad took the long view, laying out a 10-year plan envisioning a move from tents to today's living quarters in air-conditioned trailers, to concrete-and-brick barracks by 2008.

In early 2006, no one is confirming such next steps, but a Balad "master plan," details undisclosed, is nearing completion, a possible model for al-Asad, Tallil and a fourth major base, al-Qayyarah in Iraq's north.

AP Investigative Researcher Randy Herschaft contributed to this report.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Fort Benning Keeps County Population on a Yo-Yo."**

Associated Press Newswires (March 19, 14:26).

Atlanta (AP) – Chattahoochee County already boasts several national titles, including youngest county, biggest beer guzzler and fastest-shrinking.

The West Georgia county's claims to fame likely flow from the same source. Chattahoochee County is home to Fort Benning, and the area's military ties could soon bring a new title to the county: fastest-growing.

"Fort Benning skews our demographics quite a few ways," said probate judge and local historian Ken Van Horn.

The Army infantry base constitutes 78 percent of the geographic area of Chattahoochee county, which backs up to the Alabama state line. The county's population in 2005 was 14,679 – down 967 people from 2004, when the count was 15,646, according to the latest U.S. Census estimate. The 6.2 percent loss in population from July 1, 2004, to July 1, 2005, makes Chattahoochee the fastest-shrinking county in the United States.

Georgia is one of the nation's fastest-growing states. But locals say the ebb and flow in population can be credited to military activity.

"It's Fort Benning doing its thing: going in, going out. They've got troops everywhere – in Iraq, in Afghanistan, everywhere," said Earetha Tymes, a secretary in Cusseta, the county seat.

Van Horn said Chattahoochee could be called "The Incredible Elastic County."

"During a war, troops are deployed and return on a regular basis. They're back right now, so the numbers are skewed," he said. "And next year, our population will have grown by fill-in-the-blank."

Interim county manager Elvin Hardy said annual census figures in rural areas like Chattahoochee are often based on license plate renewals. The population could have been undercounted because troops who stored their vehicles and let their registrations lapse wouldn't have been included in the 2005 figures.

The population yo-yo affects everything from local sales taxes to traffic, Van Horn said. And in planning for a possible population boom, it's also affecting the price of land in the 251-square mile county.

As many as 30,000 military men, women and families affected by Base Realignment and Closure could descend on Fort Benning. Hardy said the land grab among developers has already begun, as thousands of acres have been bought to build commercial and residential projects.

A high school was recently opened and a new middle school is planned in anticipation of increased enrollment.

James Cabe, a car shop owner, spent his childhood in Chattahoochee County and moved back seven years ago. He said he's getting used to the growth, and even looks forward to the day he can get pizza at Papa John's instead of at a local gas station.

"That'd be nice," said the 31-year-old.

Jeff Ayres. 2006. **"BRAC Pushes Bypass Effort."** Northwest Florida Daily News (Fort Walton Beach, FL) (March 19).

Panel: Bypass, Bridge Would Benefit Air Force, Motorists

About 12,000 people will arrive in Northwest Florida during the next five years as Base Realignment and Closure additions to area military bases take hold. A 10-mile bypass around Niceville and a second span to the Mid-Bay Bridge are in the works.

Supporters say both initiatives, if realized, can greatly aid in easing the BRAC transition. But the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority needs Air Force land to build the bypass, and a second span is years away.

Eglin Air Force Base will no doubt need as much of its land as possible to accommodate BRAC changes, and may look with a sharp eye at any land requests made to its Mission Enhancement Committee. But Gordon Fornell, a retired Air Force lieutenant general and MBBA member, hopes the bridge and bypass can be examples of how the military and civilian sectors can work together.

"We're trying to present ourselves as a model for growth and expansion," Fornell said. The bypass is aimed to relieve traffic on White Point Road. It would run north from the Mid-Bay Bridge toll plaza parallel to White Point Road, cross State Road 20 and curve northwest to connect to College Boulevard before ending at State Road 85.

No formal bypass proposal has been presented to Eglin yet. MBBA Executive Director Jim Vest said he and other board members are waiting "for Eglin to get their

feet on the ground" as BRAC planning and implementation begin

The MBBA and the base have had some informal discussions on the road, though, and Vest says a solution can be worked out that benefits both sides. The Air Force typically doesn't give up land unless it benefits the public without harming its mission. It doesn't comment publicly until a formal request is in hand.

"We are seeing a cooperative effort," Vest said. "Certainly, they have land needs, but they see there's going to be an impact on infrastructure." The base has several requests for land from local governments on the table. "We're in the cue. We have high priority," Fornell said of the MBBA's request. Eglin denied a request several years ago to build a road east of White Point Road in the same general area where the bypass is proposed. MBBA member Jimmy Nielsen said the projects need to be dealt with soon, even if it means getting started on the second span before the bypass if the land request is granted.

"The new bridge needs to be (addressed) sooner rather than later. (That) needs to be the avenue of the day. The traffic ... is not going to go away."

Daily News Staff Writer Jeff Ayres can be reached at 863-1111, Ext. 444.

Unattributed. 2006. **"UAV Mission."** Grand Forks (ND) Herald (March 19).

U.S. Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., will hold an "action summit" Wednesday focusing on the potential economic, research and defense-related impacts unmanned aerial

vehicles will have on Grand Forks and the Red River Valley Research Corridor.

Dorgan helped UND create a center of excellence for UAVs last year with \$1 million in federal funding, and Grand Forks Air Force Base will receive the UAV mission as a result of last year's Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Summit participants will hear from national experts on UAV operations and will brainstorm ways to tap into the growing sector.

The summit runs from 8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday at the UND School of Aerospace Sciences. Dorgan and keynote speaker Brig. Gen. Kevin Kennedy will speak at 11 a.m.

Info: www.theresearchcorridor.com.

Martin Stolz. 2006. **"Broadway Complex Plans Are Stirring Debate."** The San Diego (CA) Union-Tribune (March 17): B3.

Navy Considering Bids for 14.7 Acres

Opponents and supporters of the Navy's vision for waterfront office and hotel towers at its Broadway Complex made their cases yesterday at competing news conferences.

The Broadway Complex Coalition, a group of planners, environmentalists and community groups, repeated their opposition to the Navy's redevelopment plans for its 14.7-acre downtown site. Many called for the creation of a park and all agreed San Diegans, who have thus far been shut out of the secretive process, need to participate in charting the site's future.

At City Hall, Mayor Jerry Sanders appeared with Julie Meier Wright, chief executive officer of the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corp., to voice their support for the Navy and to criticize the coalition.

The Navy wants to entice developers to replace its aging complex with a Naval office tower in return for the opportunity to build other high-rise offices, hotels and shops at Broadway and North Harbor Drive.

The Navy Broadway Complex was spared from a round of closures last year under a deal with the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. The commission said the complex should be shuttered if a redevelopment deal isn't reached by Jan. 1.

Developers vying to win the Navy contract must spend from \$98 million to \$180 million to build new naval administrative offices, depending on the building's size. The developers could then build towers, with up to 2.9 million square feet on the balance of the site; the plans require that about 2 acres be set aside for open space.

The project's parameters were struck in a 1992 agreement with the city.

Navy officials are reviewing bids and have withheld information about the bidders. They are expected to choose a winning bidder by the end of the month.

Opponents gathered on the esplanade across from the Navy's offices, as tourists snapped photographs in front of the USS Midway carrier museum.

Joel Ramos, an organizer with the Center on Policy Initiatives, a labor-backed research and advocacy group, called the project "an incredible opportunity to demonstrate responsible development."

“Whatever is decided upon, it should be a communal decision, which can only happen from a more open, public process that has received significant input from our local communities,” he said.

Sanders said Navy officials had reassured him “they’ll be open” to negotiations on the developers plans.

Plans are to be reviewed by the Centre City Development Corp., the city’s downtown redevelopment arm. The CCDC’s role is limited to ensure consistency with the 1992 agreement. Meier Wright said the opponents “fail to recognize” the public’s past opportunities to participate in formulating the plans and the city was lucky to be “enabled to be a partner in the design.”

Her organization fought to keep the complex from the base closure process. It is supported with \$1.1 million in city tax money and about \$2.2 million from member business.

Doug Manchester, whose company is reportedly a bidder on the project, is a San Diego Regional Economic Development Corp. member; his company pays the organization \$1,500 per year. Manchester officials have declined to comment on whether they have bid on the Broadway Complex.

Meier Wright and Sanders spoke of the possibility of federal agencies or Indian tribes obtaining the land if the Broadway Complex redevelopment effort fails.

But according to Philip Coyle, a member of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, the city – not other federal entities – would determine future uses for the land, if the project fails.

The commission ceases to exist on April 1. Meier Wright said it might continue in a limited way, though that it is not decided.

Sanders said his understanding of the process comes from Navy officials, the Economic Development Corp. and city staff, and “I can only go on what I’m being told.”

“I’m not backing off because of any other interpretation,” he said.

Assemblywoman Lori Saldana, whose district includes downtown, wants to see the land as a waterfront park. She is seeking to get other elected officials to join her, she said, because “there are a lot of families and a lot of kids that have no place to play.”

Unattributed. 2006. **“Sen. Burns, Rep. Rehberg Announce Malmstrom Attributes Study.”** US Fed News (March 16).

Rep. Dennis Rehberg, R-Mont. (at large), issued the following press release:

Sen. Conrad Burns (R-Mont.) and Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-Mont.) announced today the U.S. Air Force will conduct an “Attributes Study” of Montana’s Malmstrom Air Force on April 10. The study will evaluate Malmstrom’s assets, strategic value and potential for new missions. Senator Burns said, “Denny and I understand that Malmstrom offers unique strengths and capabilities for our military and national defense. It will remain a critical base as we evaluate emerging threats around the world. This attributes study will provide evidence of what we already know: Malmstrom is a first class facility with no land encroachment issues, outstanding housing we’ve funded

over the years through the Defense Appropriations Committees, and a high quality of life for soldiers there in Great Falls. Malmstrom wants more work and we're going to make sure they get it."

Congressman Rehberg said, "This is an excellent opportunity for Montana's congressional delegation to show the Air Force the true value of Malmstrom. Whether it's the superior air space or strategic location to emerging threats, Malmstrom has a lot to offer the Air Force. April 10 begins an advertising campaign for Malmstrom and Conrad and I will continue our commitment to bringing new missions to this base."

In a meeting March 7 with Senator Burns and Congressman Rehberg, U.S. Air Force Lieutenant General Steve Wood said the Air Force Attributes study is an "A to Z study" of a base. The Air Force will file a report that will go back to the government where the bases' strengths can be matched up with available government missions.

Senator Burns said, "I've met with the top leadership of the Defense Department, and nearly all of the top leadership of the Air Force many times. I have been over to the Pentagon so many times that they have a parking spot ready for me. Those meetings and our joint efforts made this "Attributes Study" a reality."

Congressman Rehberg said, "There's definitely a place at the Air Force table for Malmstrom. This base has the ability to serve a valuable role in meeting new threats facing our nation. I hope Max will join me and Conrad in touting Malmstrom's many great attributes."

Senator Burns and Congressman Rehberg, Montana's two Congressional appropriators, have been instrumental in securing funds

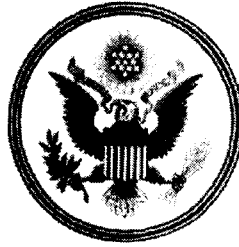
and fighting to keep missions at Malmstrom, including adding a F-15 squadron through the latest Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.

Senator Burns is a senior member of the powerful Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee and Congressman Rehberg is a member of the House Military Quality of Life Subcommittee on Appropriations, giving them advantageous positions to secure funding for Malmstrom and ensure the base is a part of the Air Force's future plans.

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"Fort Bragg Anticipates Growth Due to Base Realignment."

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Andy Vuong. 2006. **"Defense Firms to Talk Tactics."** Denver (CO) Post (March 20)

Environmental Issues Will Share Time with Military Concerns for Contractors Meeting This Week in Denver

Hundreds of defense contractors and government officials will converge in Denver this week to discuss efforts to improve defense and military work while protecting the environment.

That is the theme of the 2006 Joint Services Environmental Management Conference, which runs today through Thursday at the Denver Convention Center.

About 2,500 people representing at least 350 companies nationwide are expected to attend the conference, said Sam Campagna, director of operations for the National Defense Industrial Association, the industry trade group sponsoring the event.

Campagna said some topics will include pollution prevention and Base Realignment and Closure plans, the government's effort to reorganize base structures to more efficiently and effectively support the armed forces.

Several senior government officials will be in attendance, including Phil Grone, the undersecretary of defense for installations and environment, and Lynn Scarlett, deputy secretary of the Interior.

Insight from federal government officials during the conference will help defense contractors position their business, said

Everett G. Willard, director of federal contracting for MWH Global in Broomfield.

'They provide a little policy overview, and from that the contractors kind of get an idea of where the money is going to flow,' Willard said. 'So you know if you're well-positioned to get some follow-on work or new work.'

MWH will be among the 350 exhibitors at the conference. Willard said the conference is one of the largest defense-related trade shows.

The conference will be held in conjunction with the GeoSpatial Technologies Symposium.

Other local defense contractors that will have an exhibit booth at the conference include Aurora-based Merrick & Co. and Douglas County-based CH2M Hill.

'It's a good venue to see existing clients from all over the country,' said Gary Outlaw, vice president of business development for Merrick.

CH2M Hill will use the conference to win new clients by introducing a new product called Enterprise Spatial Solutions that will help government agencies visualize their data, said Brad Jones, a company spokesman.

The Joint Services Environmental Management conference has traditionally been held in San Antonio.

But organizers decided to move the conference around the country last year after the Defense Department began supporting the event, said Campagna, the NDIA spokesman.

The conference was in Tampa, Fla., last year and will be in Columbus, Ohio, next year.

Staff writer Andy Vuong can be reached at 303-820-1209 or avuong@denverpost.com.

Jeff Ristine. 2006. **"Joint Airport on a Base Will Not Fly, Military Says."** The San Diego (CA) Union-Tribune (March 16): A1.

Tasked with serving and protecting the same public, local military brass and the countywide airport authority are growing more polarized than ever over the answer to the region's future air transportation needs.

Remarks from both sides reflect an increasing exasperation, and even mistrust, developing as the five-year airport site-selection effort enters its home stretch with only five or six options on the table.

Top military figures accused the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority yesterday of disregarding national security and passenger safety by continuing to study Miramar, North Island and Camp Pendleton as joint military-civilian sites.

Sailors and Marines train for war at the three bases, and a civilian presence never will be compatible with that mission, Rear Adm. Len Hering Sr. and Maj. Gen. Michael R. Lehnert said.

"Aviators have a term for the condition that we're seeing right now," Lehnert said. "It's called target fixation. It's when you ignore all other issues going on."

Authority officials, meanwhile, say they seek nothing less than to settle the perennial

airport issue, and that the military ought to let the process play out.

"This may be the last opportunity this region is going to have for a long, long time to be able to study these sites in total," said Joseph Craver, chairman of the authority board. "To stop before we do that is, I think, an injustice to the citizens that we represent."

Others said the technical analysis now under way may well rule out one or more military bases for joint use, as happened with East Miramar when consultants determined there were terrain obstructions.

"We do need to do that analysis, and we need the military to help us explain those things a bit better," said Paul Nieto, chairman of the authority's strategic planning committee.

Besides the military installations, the authority is considering Boulevard in East County and the Yuha Desert of southwestern Imperial County, where a 100-mile magnetic-levitation train to transport travelers could add up to \$20 billion in project costs, according to a report to be released tomorrow.

Still off to the side is the possibility of stretching Lindbergh Field to its operational capacity, with or without adjacent Marine Corps Recruit Depot land for a second runway.

The nine appointed members of the authority board expect to select an airport option within two months, with a ballot measure in November. Three members are on record against the military options.

Hering, commander of Navy Region Southwest, and Lehnert, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations West,

spoke yesterday with the editorial board of The San Diego Union-Tribune, which regularly hosts newsmakers to discuss current events and invites newsroom reporters and editors to the meetings.

Lehnert said he believes the "target fixation" for the airport agency is the Miramar Marine Corps Air Station, where he said carrier landing practice and other combat-aircraft operations should rule out a civilian airport.

Hering and Lehnert said none of the installations would still be under review had the authority considered the impact on the military's mission as seriously as it has measured issues such as the amount of earthwork that would be required to level the proposed civilian sites.

In public and private discussions with the agency's staff and its technical consultants, Lehnert said efforts to identify insurmountable problems with airport operations at the military site have "gone on deaf ears."

Those issues include the prospect of shifting carrier training flights at Miramar to airspace over Tierrasanta, the neighborhood southeast of Miramar, and the presence of explosives at North Island Naval Air Station in Coronado.

And Hering said any dream of joint use ignores the chaos that would ensue from any 9/11-style lockdown that renders military bases off-limits to civilians, possibly for months.

Angela Shafer-Payne, vice president of strategic planning at the airport authority, said the agency hasn't fully answered the military's concerns because they are still being investigated.

"That's why we need to get to the end of this analysis and present it to the public," she said. "Our technical analysis will only permit something that is safe."

Findings will be shared with the board as they develop, she said, as occurred Monday when consultants identified troubling concerns with crosswinds at North Island Naval Air Station, where parallel runways are infeasible.

The authority has always assumed that access to civilian and military sides of any base would be separated, Shafer-Payne said, one of the reasons why a subterranean tunnel from Lindbergh Field is being studied for the North Island proposal.

Craver noted that the authority honored congressional pressure to table the military options during the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's latest review, which ended in November. As a result, he said, the agency had only a few months to gather and assess technical information.

"The data that has been shared with us by the military is loud and clear," Craver said. All three military sites face "huge challenges" for joint use, but Craver said the process of collecting facts and comparing the sites against one another needs to be finished.

As for "target fixation," Craver -- a decorated combat pilot in the Vietnam War -- said, "My mind is completely wide open."

The next round of information on the military sites, including airport costs, is due at a March 27 airport committee meeting.

At this week's committee meeting, a dispute arose as to whether the agency has screened the military sites to the same level as

discarded options such as Ramona and Otay Mesa.

Board member Mary Teresa Sessom and Hering contend the authority has yet to apply "Tier I" criteria that would show, for example, how many military-housing residents would be affected by a new airport. But Shafer-Payne said the screening was done in 2003, albeit with a "cookie cutter" template for a two-runway airport that has since been refined and will need to be updated.

Craver said he is "a little disappointed" with the military's position.

"It would be comforting for them to be able to sit at the table with us and go through these issues," he said. To some people, he said "they're coming across as not being good neighbors."

"I don't want them to get that label put on them," Craver said, but the resistance "is very distractive to the airport authority and our process."

In not closing any San Diego bases, Hering and Lehnert said the Pentagon's BRAC process confirmed the long-term importance of Miramar, North Island and Pendleton as linchpins of national security.

Hering said the military has been unwilling to answer "what-if" scenarios with the authority, such as moving operations out of Miramar. Doing so, he said, might allow the authority to claim any joint-use proposal.

Henry Cuningham. 2006. **"Fort Bragg Anticipates Growth Due to Base Realignment."** The Fayetteville (NC) Observer (March 15).

Fort Bragg expects to gain more than 2,000 people this year through base realignment, the deputy garrison commander said Tuesday.

Gary Knight, Fort Bragg's deputy garrison commander, gave the estimate at a meeting of the BRAC Regional Group.

The group brings together local government officials from 10 surrounding counties and state and military officials to plan for requirements and shortfalls that come about from the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment process.

Fort Bragg will take over Pope Air Force Base, and Forces Command and U.S. Army Reserve Command are coming to Fort Bragg from Fort McPherson in Atlanta.

"The numbers change every day," Knight said.

Fort Bragg expects to gain more than 20,900 people – including military, civilian employees and family members, through 2011, the year by which changes are supposed to be finished, Knight said.

Fort Bragg expects to add more than 2,100 people in 2007 and 730 in 2008, Knight said.

The Army post should lose about 800 people in 2009 after the 7th Special Forces Group moves to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, Knight said. More than 2,100 people will come in 2010, he said. The figures only include moves because of BRAC and gains for other reasons, he said.

The group agreed to establish a temporary five-member executive panel of the steering committee to conduct business.

"We have old census data, so we need to somehow try to get more current data and compare it with the anticipated impacts from BRAC," said Jason Epley, who convened the meeting. He is a chief planner with the N.C. Division of Community Assistance.

Areas in which data are being sought include the local labor force, economic effects, health care, transportation, real estate, land use and environmental issues.

Retired Brig. Gen. Paul Dordal, the military liaison, said the formation of an executive committee is a timely and important step in preparations.

"If we wait till midsummer when the decisions are all finalized by the Army staff and the Air Force staff and we actually have people coming to the area based on the BRAC actions, then we have waited too long," Dordal said. "We are already behind at that point. We need to be preparing for that now."

Cumberland, Hoke, Harnett and Moore counties will each have a member on the committee. Fort Bragg is either located in or borders those counties.

"It acknowledges really that we have a two-tier organization that focuses on the four counties that will be significantly impacted by the BRAC impact and implementation," Dordal said.

Greg Taylor, chairman of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners, will represent Bladen, Richmond, Lee, Robeson, Sampson and Scotland counties.

Taylor initially balked at the proposal that gives only one representative to six outlying counties.

"There's no doubt Cumberland is going to be the one that's primarily impacted," Taylor said. "Bladen County is very regionally minded. What's good for the region is going to be good for Bladen County. We want to be part of the solution."

Unattributed. 2006. **"SBA Agreement Would Benefit New Mexico Firms As Ft. Bliss Grows."** US Fed News (March 15).

The office of Sen. Pete V. Domenici, R-N.M., issued the following press release:

Sens. Jeff Bingaman and Pete Domenici, Rep. Steve Pearce and Gov. Bill Richardson today indicated that they have taken action to ensure that small and medium-sized businesses in New Mexico are not excluded from competing for what could amount to \$2 billion-\$3 billion worth of construction projects in New Mexico.

The New Mexico lawmakers and governor have issued letters to the directors of the Small Business Administration offices in El Paso and Albuquerque calling for the development of a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would allow New Mexico businesses to compete for planned expansion projects at Fort Bliss – especially when the work will be carried out in New Mexico.

Fort Bliss, which is based in El Paso but has extensive training ranges in southern New Mexico, is currently undergoing a massive infrastructure expansion. The uniformed population is expected to increase by nearly 25,000 in the next few years, as several units are relocated to the Army base as part of decisions made last year by the Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Their joint letter states:

"The vast majority of Fort Bliss' training ranges are located in Doña Ana and Otero counties in New Mexico, and all of the improvements due on Fort Bliss' training ranges will be done on New Mexico soil.

"The anticipated result of an MOU would be New Mexico companies being qualified, and aggressively encouraged, to bid on Fort Bliss-related projects in New Mexico that are currently restrictive competition bids limited to the El Paso district office's region.

"We fully support this partnership between the SBA offices, not only for this current Fort Bliss expansion, but for any future expansion in New Mexico that should occur at this bi-state military installation. Additionally, we hope that preference will be given to the qualified, set-aside contractors that are local to the El Paso/southern New Mexico region."

Because Fort Bliss' administrative offices sit on the Texas side of the installation, responsibility for identifying and vetting qualified contractors for this work has fallen within the jurisdiction of the SBA office in El Paso. As a result, many New Mexico firms have not been made aware that bids are being solicited for construction, even when those projects are to be done in New Mexico.

In a letter to the SBA offices, the lawmakers and the governor expressed a measure of satisfaction that the two offices have begun to discuss this problem.

Additional Notes

We are occasionally surprised by remarks made by our beloved clients, the hard-working, often-ignored, and always

underappreciated members of the various congressional staffs. One that caught us up short was uttered by a staffer who was casting about for witnesses to invite to a hearing. While he appreciated the various conversations, reports, briefings, and memoranda that we generate, he lamented that, "you guys never testify."

Ma non, mon cherie! We are an all-service Service. Note the recent examples below:

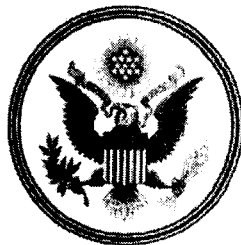
Congressional Testimony: Betsy Cody and Ron O'Rourke Testify

Betsy Cody, specialist in natural resources policy, testified on February 28, 2006 before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power. Her testimony provided background information about the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI water reuse and reclamation program and highlighted issues in its implementation.

Ronald O'Rourke, specialist in national defense, testified on March 15, 2006 before the House Armed Services' Subcommittee on Projection Forces. He testified about the evolving missions of the U.S. Navy and how the Navy's surface and subsurface assets execute those missions today and how the Navy envisions executing them in the future. He responded to several questions about the Navy and shipbuilding, including ship propulsion technology, options for future aircraft carrier designs, and Navy anti-submarine warfare capabilities in the Pacific.

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

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“USO Opens New Center in Guam.”

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“Defense Contractors, Environmental Experts Seek Common Ground.”

“MD HB 1576, 2006-2006.”

“Lawmaker Hopes to Attach UXO Cleanup Legislation to Defense Bill.”

“Phillips to Address House Panel.”

“Army Reserve Welcomes New Commander at 99th.”

“Cases Test Cleanup Cost Recovery Capabilities at BRAC Sites.”

“Officials Wrangle over Funds Veto Complicates Process in Harford.”

“Boehlert Has Been a True Friend.”

“Boehlert Wants to Leave at Top of Game.”

“Assembly OKs Authority for Fort Site.”

“Federal Preparedness, Military Officials May Soon Populate Regional FEMA Offices.”

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Christine Haughney. 2006. **“Building Homes on Old Bases Isn’t So Easy.”** The Wall Street Journal (March 22): B1.

San Francisco – LENNAR CORP. seemed to have snatched two dream properties when it paid \$2 for the right to rebuild two former military bases in one of the nation’s most expensive housing markets.

But Lennar executives have learned there's nothing easy about turning vacant military land into profitable housing developments. At Hunter's Point, a former Navy shipyard in southern San Francisco, Lennar faces demands to build more affordable houses for an economically depressed population as it tries to market homes in an area many San Franciscans consider environmentally unsafe.

Even at the closed Mare Island Navy shipyard in suburban Vallejo, the builder's success in selling homes with sweeping bay views has been overshadowed by criticism that it should have first developed job-creating commercial sites.

"It's not for the weak of heart," says Tim Ford, executive director for the Association of Defense Communities, a group based in Washington, D.C., that advises communities on base redevelopment. "It's something that you have to be able to look past all of the problems and realize the potential of a piece of land."

Lennar's experience is being closely watched because it has made the biggest plunge among home builders as the U.S. government shuts more bases.

The incentive for home builders: The government assumes responsibility for much of the costly environmental cleanup and sifting through competing community demands for the abandoned bases, limiting the builders' exposure to delays. Builders pay to construct roads and other infrastructure improvements. They profit by selling the redeveloped plots of land or newly-built homes.

At stake is the economic viability of areas around the 22 more major bases that have been ordered closed by President Bush.

Among them: Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington and Concord Naval Weapons Station near Oakland, Calif., both due to shut down by 2011.

While other national home builders — including Toll Brothers Inc., based in Horsham, Pa., and Actus Lend Lease, Nashville, Tenn. — have looked at the bases slated for closure, Miami-based Lennar is the national developer furthest along in the redevelopment process. As the nation's third-largest home builder based on number of homes built, Lennar has plucked five military-base redevelopment projects in California, which company officials say offered bases with the best large parcels near major cities.

Lennar took ownership of Mare Island land in 2003 and Hunter's Point in 2005 for \$1 apiece. An affiliated company, LNR Property Corp., is helping with nonresidential redevelopment of the bases' combined 1,100 acres. The price reflects the risk of the two projects, which require more infrastructure investment than bases more immediately available for home building. In contrast, Lennar paid \$649 million in 2005 for the former El Toro Marine Air Corps station, covering 3,700-acres in real-estate hotbed Orange County, Calif.

To be sure, Lennar expects both Mare Island and Hunter's Point to pay off. After investing \$80 million in Mare Island, it has sold 178 homes for an average of \$700,000 apiece, or nearly \$125 million. It splits the profits with the city of Vallejo. The company expects to invest a similar amount at Hunter's Point. It projects a profit there by mid- to late 2007 after starting home sales.

And while military-base redevelopment represents a tiny part of Lennar's business —

in 2005, it had sales of \$13.8 billion and profit of \$2.4 billion – some analysts say the move gives the company an edge over competitors. “This is not going to make or break the company,” says Stephen Kim, a managing director at Citigroup Investment Research. Still, he adds, Lennar is gaining valuable experience learning to negotiate, particularly in San Francisco, a fertile area for social activism but a lucrative market for home builders. “The more resistance there is,” says Mr. Kim, “the greater potential for a competitive advantage to emerge.”

Lennar executives acknowledge they’ve encountered unexpected problems and delays in negotiating with the military, local governments and community groups. “Everybody – including the Navy, the cities and us – all have gone through a learning curve,” says Emile Haddad, president of Lennar’s Western region, which oversees these projects.

Standing on the highest mound of Hunter’s Point amid neat piles of concrete left from razed military buildings, Kofi Bonner, president of Lennar’s urban land division for northern California, points out the abandoned industrial warehouses where Hunter’s Point opened as a shipyard in 1867. It closed in 1974, triggering three decades of rancorous on-and-off discussions over its reuse and sporadic industrial use. The area lags behind San Francisco as a whole in average household income (\$41,994 compared with \$55,221) and housing values (a median of \$119,600 versus \$396,400).

Lennar executives have pledged that a third of the 1,238 homes planned for Hunter’s Point will be affordable, measured by the median household income for Hunter’s Point. The home builder also has sponsored seminars on cleaning up poor credit records and joined with an affiliated mortgage

company to help residents buy homes with a minimal deposit.

But some community leaders say that’s not enough. Lennar’s housing “may be affordable to some people, but it won’t be affordable to people here in Hunter’s Point,” says Willie Ratcliff, publisher of the Bayview local newspaper.

Lennar’s promise to create 1,000 permanent jobs over the next decade, with initiatives such as attracting the film-production industry to the base’s abandoned warehouses, also has met with community skepticism.

Meanwhile, Lennar faces a marketing challenge. Though the Navy spent \$400 million to clean up the area polluted partly by a national radiation-defense lab, Hunter’s Point still has lower life expectancy and higher hospitalization rates for chronic diseases like diabetes compared with the rest of the city, according to Dr. Rajiv Bhatia, director of environmental health for San Francisco’s health department.

“Some people are convinced that the shipyard is a radioactive, pulsating volcano of ill winds and vapors,” says Scott Madison, a local businessman who chairs a citizens advisory committee.

Even along the well landscaped streets lined with Victorian homes on Mare Island, Lennar has encountered community resistance for getting its plans to build 1,400 homes off the ground faster than its efforts to build job-generating commercial and industrial space to replace the 10,000 jobs lost when the base closed in 1996.

“We would like to see the industrial go up first,” says Craig Whitton, Vallejo’s community-development director. A Lennar

spokesman says the company has attracted more than 85 businesses that employ 2,000 and is on schedule to bring in a promised 6,784 jobs by 2013.

Vallejo officials also are pressing the home builder to preserve 502 buildings and features of the Mare Island base that the city considers historically significant. Lennar already has spent three years categorizing every building for its landmark status, architectural integrity and contributions to the Mare Island historic district.

Despite the frustrations at the two bases, Lennar's Mr. Haddad says he's optimistic both projects will help the communities and be financially rewarding for the home builder. "One thing that I love about my job," he says, "is that I can ultimately see the results of my efforts through tough times."

Unattributed. 2006. **"USO Opens New Center in Guam."** PRNewswire (March 1, 15:33).

Arlington, Va., March 21 /PRNewswire/ – The USO is opening its newest center in Guam on March 23, 2006, bringing to 125 the number of USO centers worldwide. Located in the village of Tumon, the center is expected to serve thousands of service members and their families residing on the island. Members of the Guam congressional and local delegations are expected to attend the opening.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20031119/USO>)

This is the second time the USO has operated a center on Guam. The original center was housed in a Quonset hut on

Guam Naval Base at the close of World War II. It was later destroyed during a typhoon and re-established at another location in 1953. The first closed in 1993 due to military downsizing.

"The USO is proud to be back in Guam, offering a touch of home to military personnel and their families after 13 years," said USO president and CEO Edward A. Powell. "We thank Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo and the Guam community for their hard work and support in helping the USO make this center a reality."

The center will be located in the Royal Orchid Hotel and will operate rent-free for the next three years through the generosity of the Su family, owners of the hotel. The center will offer information resources, free Internet and e-mail access, a large-screen projection television, video games, movies, free pre-paid phone cards, pool table, tabletop games and refreshments. Service members also will have access to discounted products and services in the Tumon area.

Donations from Triple J Motors, Volvo International and other companies helped to make the center possible. The Guam Naval Station Seabees and Andersen Air Force Base command also provided volunteers to construct the new USO.

About the USO:

For 65 years, the USO (United Service Organizations) has been providing morale, welfare and recreational services to U.S. military personnel and their families. The USO is a nonprofit, charitable organization, relying on the generosity of the American people to support its programs and services. The USO is supported by World Partners AT&T Corporation, BAE SYSTEMS, Clear

Channel Communications, The Coca-Cola Company, Military Channel, S&K Sales Company and TriWest Healthcare Alliance. Other corporate donors, including the United Way and Combined Federal Campaign (CFC-0600), have joined thousands of individual donors to support the USO. For more information on the USO, please visit our Web site at <http://www.uso.org/>.

CONTACT: Tiane Harrison of USO, +1-703-908-6433, or tharrison@uso.org

Andy Vuong, 2006. **“Defense Contractors, Environmental Experts Seek Common Ground.”** The Denver (CO) Post (March 21).

Hundreds of defense contractors and government officials will converge in Denver this week to discuss efforts to improve defense and military work while protecting the environment.

That is the theme of the 2006 Joint Services Environmental Management Conference, which runs today through Thursday at the Denver Convention Center.

About 2,500 people representing at least 350 companies nationwide are expected to attend the conference, said Sam Campagna, director of operations for the National Defense Industrial Association, the industry trade group sponsoring the event.

Campagna said some topics will include pollution prevention and Base Realignment and Closure plans, the government's effort to reorganize base structures to more efficiently and effectively support the armed forces.

Several senior government officials will be in attendance, including Phil Grone, the undersecretary of defense for installations and environment, and Lynn Scarlett, deputy secretary of the Interior.

Insight from federal government officials during the conference will help defense contractors position their business, said Everett G. Willard, director of federal contracting for MWH Global in Broomfield.

“They provide a little policy overview, and from that the contractors kind of get an idea of where the money is going to flow,” Willard said. “So you know if you're well-positioned to get some follow-on work or new work.” MWH will be among the 350 exhibitors at the conference. Willard said the conference is one of the largest defense-related trade shows.

The conference will be held in conjunction with the GeoSpatial Technologies Symposium.

Other local defense contractors that will have an exhibit booth at the conference include Aurora-based Merrick & Co. and Douglas County-based CH2M Hill.

“It's a good venue to see existing clients from all over the country,” said Gary Outlaw, vice president of business development for Merrick.

CH2M Hill will use the conference to win new clients by introducing a new product called Enterprise Spatial Solutions that will help government agencies visualize their data, said Brad Jones, a company spokesman.

The Joint Services Environmental Management conference has traditionally been held in San Antonio.

But organizers decided to move the conference around the country last year after the Defense Department began supporting the event, said Campagna, the NDIA spokesman.

The conference was in Tampa, Fla., last year and will be in Columbus, Ohio, next year.

Unattributed. 2006. **“MD HB 1576, 2006-2006.”** LegAlert (March 21).

Establishing the BRAC Marketing and Infrastructure Improvement Program in the Department of Business and Economic Development; Providing for the Administration of the Program; Providing for Financial Assistance for Infrastructure Improvements in Specified Counties; Establishing an Advisory Committee for the Program; Requiring the Governor to Include a Specified Appropriation for the Program; Etc.

20060222 - (H) FIRST READING HOUSE RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

20060227 - (H) RE-REFERRED ECONOMIC MATTERS

20060301 - (H) HEARING 3/14 AT 1:00 P.M.

20060309 - (H) HEARING CANCELLED

20060309 - (H) HEARING 3/15 AT 1:00 P.M.

20060313 - (H) HEARING CANCELLED

20060313 - (H) HEARING 3/23 AT 1:00 P.M.

20060320 - (H) HEARING CANCELLED

Unattributed. 2006. **“Lawmaker Hopes to Attach UXO Cleanup Legislation to Defense Bill.”** Defense Environment Alert 14/6 (March 21).

A long-time House champion of speeding unexploded ordnance (UXO) cleanup will try to attach legislation to the upcoming defense authorization bill that would focus DOD remediation efforts on UXO cleanups, particularly at those bases closed under the first four rounds of BRAC, according to a source familiar with the bill.

The expected move is the second instance in as many weeks where lawmakers have indicated plans to jumpstart cleanups at bases under past BRAC rounds by capitalizing on the heightened congressional interest in BRAC given the large number of sites to be closed in the 2005 round.

In the latest effort, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), founder of the House UXO Caucus and a frequent critic of the Defense Department's slow-paced UXO cleanup efforts, is working on legislation that would move toward creating a coordinated, centralized response to UXO contamination, according to a source familiar with the bill.

The 2005 round of BRAC base closures “has absolutely made the issue more salient to people, especially those with closed bases,” given that it closed more bases than the first four rounds combined, the source says. Similarly, Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA), who plans to form a bipartisan BRAC caucus in the House later this year, hopes to gain momentum for separate BRAC cleanup legislation by turning to the many

lawmakers whose districts contain closing bases under the BRAC 2005 round, according to a source in his office. Farr is considering legislation that would create a new federal agency to oversee all aspects of BRAC cleanup and property transfer (Defense Environment Alert, March 7, p8).

Blumenauer's legislation would mandate that DOD report to Congress on how it plans to remove UXO from bases closed during the first four rounds of BRAC, known as "legacy" BRAC sites, and would create a single DOD "point of contact" for the services that would oversee all UXO cleanup projects, according to the source familiar with his bill. Blumenauer expects to have the legislation ready by May, when defense authorization legislation should be seeing committee action.

The bill will be based on previously introduced legislation but will differ in some significant respects that the source would not discuss, citing the preliminary status of the bill's language. "We don't mean to downplay what's being done at each individual site, but DOD has taken too small an approach," the source says. "There's not enough fire under them."

Blumenauer and his allies in the House have had success in getting funding for UXO cleanup and research in the past but have not established the permanent programmatic fixes they would prefer. Last year, Blumenauer was unsuccessful in his attempt to add language to the fiscal year 2006 defense authorization bill that would have conditioned the 2005 base closure round on DOD submitting a cleanup plan for the first round of BRAC, the source says.

Many current and former military bases have UXO, requiring cleanup because of the potential for explosive accidents and soil

and water contamination from munitions compounds. Blumenauer has often been at the forefront of efforts to get funding for UXO cleanups and is credited with raising the visibility of UXO as an environmental issue. Over the past two years he has attached appropriations language totaling \$15 million to defense authorization bills for DOD's Wide Area Assessment (WAA) program, aimed at identifying UXO on federal land, especially at formerly used defense sites (FUDS) whose closures predate BRAC. Of the approximately 10 million acres of suspected contaminated sites nationwide, only an estimated 20 percent truly contain UXO, according to military research sources. The assessment is required to locate potential cleanup sites and prioritize cleanup efforts.

That \$15-million figure, however, is a fraction of an effort the Defense Science Board recommended in 2003, urging Congress and DOD to spend \$200 million a year for five years to survey all federal lands with known or suspected UXO.

Blumenauer's bill could also address several other issues, including a DOD inventory of all UXO at FUDS and the full funding of the WAA, according to the source familiar with the bill. "There are good people in Congress and at the Pentagon who get it, but some others need a push in the right direction," the source says, adding that the lawmaker wants to create an economic incentive for the commercial sector to develop UXO detection and cleanup technology.

A source with the National Association of Ordnance & Explosive Waste Contractors (NAOC) calls UXO cleanup "a non-partisan issue" and says there should be additional pressure to clean up legacy BRAC sites. "A program that lasts three hundred years is no program at all," the source says, referring to

DOD estimates of how long it will take to clean legacy sites. "They haven't cleaned up or funded UXO cleanup because it's not a priority, and there's not enough emphasis from Congress."

Unattributed. 2006. **"Cases Test Cleanup Cost Recovery Capabilities at BRAC Sites."** Defense Environment Alert 14/6 (March 21).

Cost recovery litigation at a former Air Force base in Colorado could test the ability of local governments and developers to recover remediation expenses at closed bases in situations where contamination is discovered after the military transfers the property. Should the litigation fail, it could stymie BRAC property cleanups conducted by redevelopers just as the military is looking to privatize more cleanups under the 2005 Base Closure & Realignment (BRAC) round.

The Lowry local reuse authority (LRA) and homebuilders at the former Lowry Air Force Base recently filed separate suits after the Defense Department refused to reimburse the cleanup of contamination discovered after the Air Force transferred property to them. The cases could set a precedent as to what legal conditions must be met before new property owners can recover cleanup costs for newly discovered contamination stemming from past military activities at BRAC bases that have already been transferred.

The military says its liability kicks in only if another party has brought suit against the new owner for cleanup, according to a source familiar with the cases. One case could go to court by the end of this year, while the other is in preliminary stages.

At issue is the cost to remove asbestos-contaminated soil at Lowry, where the Air Force assured buyers that asbestos was not a significant problem. Subsequent examination revealed extensive asbestos contamination in soil, which resulted in a more than \$6 million asbestos sampling and cleanup project paid for by private homebuilder companies and the LRA, a venture of local governmental authorities overseeing property reuse at the site. Although the Air Force no longer owns the property at issue, the LRA and the homebuilders have separately filed suit against DOD seeking compensation for the cost of the project. DOD is the party responsible for the claim under military rules, although the Air Force is listed as a co-defendant.

Both parties claim that the military should pay for the costs under section 330 of the 1993 Defense Authorization Act, a clause that states in part that DOD will indemnify property buyers from any liability or cost "arising out of any claim for personal injury or property damage . . . that results from, or is in any manner predicated upon, the release or threatened release of any hazardous substance or pollutant or contaminant . . . as a result of DOD activities at any military installation that is closed pursuant to a base closure law." The clause refers to bases such as Lowry that were closed under any of several rounds of the BRAC law. Military regulations state that the DOD office of general counsel oversees all claims under section 330.

DOD has argued that the phrase "arising out of any claim" requires a third party to sue an entity such as the LRA for personal injury or property damage before the entity may sue for cost recovery, according to a source familiar with the cases.

But the plaintiffs have said they believe the legislative intent of the law makes it clear that DOD and the military services are liable for the cost whether or not the new property owner has been sued, citing a statement by Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) during the debate over the bill that the government “cannot ask states or businesses to assume potentially devastating liability for conditions they did not create.”

Nevertheless, both plaintiffs also are contending that a cleanup advisory against them from the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) in April 2003 qualifies as a trigger for suit under section 330, according to sources familiar with the cases. A cleanup advisory is not as serious as an enforcement action but carries the threat of costly state oversight if the recipient does not comply.

The LRA first sought relief last October through the administrative appeal process, which allowed the military to review the LRA petition for cost recovery. The Air Force denied the request last December on the grounds that the LRA had not been sued by a third party, after which the LRA filed suit. The homebuilders filed their suit without first pursuing an administrative claim.

A source familiar with the homebuilder case contends it is unlikely the Air Force could successfully defend against a claim that it is liable for the asbestos pollution. The question, the source says, is what action rises to the level of a trigger for a cost recovery lawsuit to be brought against the government.

“We’re mystified as to why we can’t settle this with the Air Force. On this matter, this is precisely what 330 was written for, to

protect the private sector,” the source says. “I don’t have any coherent position from the Air Force and they haven’t made any settlement offer.”

If the cleanup advisory does not constitute grounds for cost recovery, says a source familiar with the LRA case, then local authorities are in an impossible position that would inevitably end in an expensive outcome.

“The LRA is being put between a rock and a hard place,” the source says. “If DOD is right, the LRA should have waited for CDPHE to go to an enforcement action and then fought it instead of just cleaning up. The choice is either to comply with a relatively low-level action and clean up, or fight a high-level state enforcement, since DOD says an advisory doesn’t rise to the level of a lawsuit.”

The source says “if the DOD interpretation [of 330] prevails, recipients of BRAC property are going to pay a significant amount of money for cleanup. For BRAC property recipients it’s a huge deal.” The source points out that there is no case law on section 330 and “if the homebuilder case doesn’t get a first interpretation of 330, we will.”

Both cases are before the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. The homebuilder case, Richmond American Homes of Colorado, Inc., et al v. USA, completed the discovery phase in February and the plaintiffs are expected to file a motion for partial summary judgment by a May deadline, according to the source familiar with the case. The LRA suit, Lowry Economic Redevelopment Authority v. USA, was filed in January. The source familiar with the homebuilder case says that a trial date could be expected by the end of the year if the

claim is not addressed in summary judgment or with a settlement.

Harry Franklin. 2006. **"Phillips to Address House Panel."** Columbus (GA) Ledger-Enquirer (March 21).

Superintendent Returns to Stress Funding Needs Due to Military Growth

Muscogee County Schools Superintendent John A. Phillips Jr. will return to Washington, D.C., next week to address a second U.S. House subcommittee about school districts' need for federal funds.

The funds Phillips is seeking would help communities near military installations with construction needs, stemming from growth because of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission decisions.

Phillips will have four minutes on March 30 to state his case before the House Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies. He is to speak at 10 a.m.

The superintendent spoke before the Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life & Veterans Affairs on March 1. His comments from both appearances will be published in the Congressional Record.

Planning to accompany Phillips are Deputy Superintendent Robin Pennock; Myles Caggins, chief operations and facilities officer; Harris County Schools Superintendent Susan Andrews; Lee County, Ala., Superintendent John Painter; and superintendents or their representatives from The Seven Rivers Coalition, a group of

school systems across the country that expect heavy impact from BRAC, the return of U.S. forces from Europe and other changes in the military.

Phillips helped organize the coalition to work as a unit to seek federal dollars to help build facilities to accommodate military-connected children moving into the school districts in the next four or five years. Those other coalition districts are near Fort Riley and Fort Carson, Kan.; Fort Lee, Va.; Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Sill, Okla.; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; and Fort Bliss, Texas.

The Associated Press. 2006. **"News in Brief from the Philadelphia Area."** Associated Press Newswires (March 21, 07:56).

Willow Grove, Pa. (AP) - Upper Moreland Township commissioners decided Monday to vote at their April 3 meeting on whether to oppose a civilian or corporate airport at the Willow Grove Naval Air Station.

The commissioners hadn't taken a position on the future of the airport in a letter to Horsham Township last year, after the federal government decided to close the base by 2011. Horsham officials and a local residents group oppose any nonmilitary use of the runway.

Official base closure documents call for a joint use military and civilian airport at the base, and regional planners have said the site would be ideal for a corporate jetport.

"This would be a very detrimental use to our community and surrounding communities," said Commissioner James Martin, chairman of the board's community development and public works committee. The full board is expected to vote April 3.

Jim McKinnon. 2006. **"Army Reserve Welcomes New Commander at 99th."** Pittsburgh (PA) Post-Gazette (March 21): B4.

The Army's 99th Regional Readiness Command in Coraopolis had its third commander in a year take over this week.

Maj. Gen. James L. Snyder took over Sunday from Maj. Gen. William H. Johnson.

Gen. Johnson, now a three-star general, had commanded the 99th since August. He will take charge of the entire transportation command at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, said Army spokesman Master Sgt. Jack Gordon.

Gen. Johnson had replaced Maj. Gen. Karol A. Kennedy, who has since retired.

The 99th, with 13 colonel-level commands, includes Army Reserve facilities for thousands of soldiers in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and Washington, D.C.

Gen. Snyder said Sunday that he is "honored, privileged and humbled" by the new assignment.

"Strategizing the deployments of units for the long war on terrorism and transforming the Army Reserve for the future will be difficult," he said. "But it is important that we accomplish this mission successfully, and I feel confident that we will."

The headquarters for the 99th, one of the more storied reserve bases in the country, is slated for relocation to Fort Dix, N.J., under recent Base Realignment and Closure

Commission recommendations, Sgt. Gordon said.

Jim McKinnon can be reached at jmckinnon@post-gazette.com or 412- 263-1939.

Justin Fenton. 2006. **"Officials Wrangle over Funds Veto Complicates Process in Harford."** The Baltimore (MD) Sun (March 20): 1B.

An article in yesterday's Maryland section misidentified Harford County Councilman Dion F. Guthrie. Also, the timetable for Baltimore County's comprehensive rezoning process was misstated. The process takes place every four years. The Sun regrets the errors.

Several elected officials in Harford County, who had promised not to accept campaign contributions while they were engaged in the politically delicate task of overhauling the county's zoning laws, have reversed course now that a veto has sent the process into overtime.

Last week, County Executive David R. Craig, who last year suggested the halt on contributions, held a \$500-per-ticket fundraiser. Through a spokeswoman, Craig, a Republican, said drafting a bill to resolve the rezoning dilemma - not collecting money - is his focus.

"This is only problematic in perception," said Roxanne Lynch, director of government and community relations. "Right now, he's more intent on trying to make sure that we have a comprehensive rezoning process that's fair to property owners."

But to his opponent and a campaign finance watchdog group, Craig is altering rules he set forth.

"At this point, it really looks to me like Mr. Craig is not a man of his word and is not to be trusted on what he says," said Ann C. Helton, a Democrat from Darlington who is running for county executive.

The rezoning process takes place every eight years in Harford, allowing property owners to request new uses for their land. In the fast-growing county, the implications of the current rezoning are viewed as particularly important because of the potential growth generated by the Pentagon's base realignment and closure process, which is expected to draw 30,000 private- and public-sector jobs to Aberdeen Proving Ground over the next six years.

Though accusations of candidates being too developer-friendly are nothing new, the Harford council followed Craig's lead over the summer and passed a resolution barring members from accepting contributions from Nov. 1 to Feb. 28. It cited a desire to "remain objective to best serve the interest and needs of all the citizens of the county."

Unhappy with amendments added by the council that he said created too much new business zoning and extended beyond the county's designated growth area, Craig struck down the bill in the first week of March and pledged to work with the council to create new legislation.

His veto has complicated matters. According to the zoning code, the process is over and the county now reverts to the previous zoning designations resulting from the 1997 version of the process. Officials agree that an updated bill is necessary and have been working to resurrect the effort in some form.

Councilman Lance C. Miller, a Republican from Darlington who decided not to run for re-election, said the council has not discussed the topic of another fundraising moratorium but might need to reconsider.

"I think it's a legitimate question to bring back," Miller said. "I've got a feeling it will be a topic of discussion."

Other counties in the region have different philosophies on fundraising during rezoning.

In Baltimore County, elected officials refuse a political donation during rezoning, which occurs every eight years. Councilman Kevin B. Kamenetz, a Democrat who has served for 12 years, said members voluntarily adhere to the policy to avoid accusations that the process has been tainted.

In Howard County, the five-member council, which doubles as the zoning board, continues to raise campaign money during rezoning but must disclose gifts of \$500 or more. In an election year, the council refrains from considering zoning cases after July.

Three incumbents on Anne Arundel's council, which has no rules prohibiting contributions during rezoning, called Harford's self-imposed moratorium impractical and said the current system of disclosing financial supporters is adequate to alleviate most concerns over ethics.

Bobbie Walton, executive director of the watchdog group Common Cause Maryland, said elected officials have an ethical obligation to abstain from taking campaign contributions during rezoning.

"If it has the appearance of impacting any decisions that are made, then the public's interest is not protected," Walton said.

In vowing to eschew contributions until the administration's work with the rezoning bill was finished on Jan. 1, Craig said he wanted to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest.

"Basically, I don't think it looks good for a county executive to be raising money when we are in the process of changing laws that could hurt or help certain people in the county," he said in July.

His spokeswoman said Craig would not disclose who made contributions at his March 9 fundraiser until the next filing deadline.

"Let's look at it technically - it's really not in dispute. The veto went through, and really we're back at [the county zoning from] 1997," Lynch said.

Walton said Craig was "playing fast and loose" with his own self-imposed rules. "If [rezoning is] still needed, if it's still in discussion, then it's not a dead issue. They're making a mockery of their original pledge."

However, Councilwoman Dion F. Guthrie, a Democrat from Joppatowne, said that until the administration decides how to proceed and discussions of a new rezoning bill yield some clarity, elected officials should be able to raise money. He has a fundraiser scheduled for April 2, he said.

"I don't know how long you shut down your ability to raise funds. ... It's very expensive to run for office," he said. But, he added: "If we get the new guidelines from the administration and we have to get a new

[rezoning] bill, I guess at that point we have to reconsider."

Until then, members may want to consider upholding that initial vow and be careful who they accept contributions from, said council President Robert S. Wagner, who also is up for re-election.

"Without something imposed, if I were a council member, I'd be a little leery of accepting money from someone who may have a request in, especially some of the ones up for the possibility of approval," said Wagner, a Republican.

justin.fenton@baltsun.com\

Sun reporter Phillip McGowan contributed to this article.

Staff. 2006. "**Boehlert Has Been a True Friend.**" Observer-Dispatch (Utica, NY) (March 18): 7.

At Issue: Congressman Will Leave a Legacy of Care and Commitment

Sherwood Boehlert will be remembered for many things during his 24 years as a U.S. congressman. But his real badge of honor is that he's been a true friend of the Mohawk Valley.

Boehlert's effort has been unwavering. And his steadfast love for this region and its people has manifested itself into a legacy of care and commitment.

He will be missed.

Boehlert, 69, announced Friday afternoon that he will not seek re-election. The New Hartford Republican, who whetted his

political appetite while serving as an aide to his two congressional predecessors, was first elected to public office in 1979, when he became Oneida County executive. He was elected to Congress in 1982, and district voters returned him to Washington for 11 more consecutive terms.

Boehlert, as he often claimed unabashedly, delivered the goods. He did that with an energy and enthusiasm fired not by selfish political ambition, but by a genuine desire to do what was right for the people he represented. He was proud of his record, and that record has strengthened this region.

Boehlert's national influence is reflected through his particularly strong efforts as an environmentalist and also as chairman of the House Science Committee. He has frequently opposed his own party's environmental and energy policies and has been steadfast in working against Republican legislation he considers harmful to the country. As Science chairman, he presided over congressional hearings following the space shuttle Columbia disaster in February 2003, and has been a key player in shaping policy for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Even better than his influence on significant national issues has been his tireless commitment to his district.

In particular:

– Transportation. As senior member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Boehlert helped maintain the formula used to provide federal highway funds to states. Revisions proposed by representatives of larger southern states would have been detrimental to New York, and this region benefited significantly in recent years by projects such as the Utica-

Rome Expressway, Route 840 and improvements to Route 12 between Utica and Binghamton -- all made possible through Boehlert's hard work.

– Economic development. The loss of Griffiss Air Force Base and some 5,000 jobs was arguably the most devastating blow to the region during Boehlert's watch. But as the leader of a regional team to help strengthen and rebuild missions left behind -- namely Rome labs, the Northeast Air Defense Sector and the Defense Finance Accounting Service -- his work has been tireless and productive. The latest victory came last October when the Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommended to retain the DFAS site in Rome and add nearly 650 jobs there.

– Grassroots support. In a world where the little things that make community tick can easily get short shrift, Boehlert has been a true friend. Whether securing funds for volunteer fire departments or pitching programs for farmers, his efforts have helped to effect change in communities large and small throughout his district.

Not to be ignored is Boehlert's integrity. That always has been important to him, and in a world where corruption and compromised ethics are much too common, the congressman has maintained a steadfast code of honor. His refusal to walk in lockstep with his own party often made him a target of political opportunists, but he has worn the title of moderate proudly. He has been true to self, and by doing so, he has been true to the people of his community.

For sure, Sherry Boehlert didn't please all of the people all of the time. No one does. No one can. But for nearly a quarter of a century, he gave it his best shot. That's all any community can ask.

Elizabeth Cooper. 2006. **“Boehlert Wants to Leave at Top of Game.”** Observer-Dispatch (Utica, NY) (March 18): 10.

Shortly after U.S. Rep. Sherwood Boehlert announced his retirement Friday, he sat down with Observer-Dispatch reporter Elizabeth Cooper in Union Station for an interview. Here's some of what he said:

What was the biggest deciding factor in your decision?

“I’ve always not liked seeing someone who is at the top of his game and then goes one more time, two more times, because he can’t break away, and you take a 20-game winner and somehow he ends up with a record of 4 and 12 and sort of tarnishes the whole very distinguished record. I’ve proven by performance in areas that you can measure that I’m very effective at what I do, and now’s the time.”

What’s your greatest accomplishment as a congressman?

“I’ve got six grandchildren. That’s like asking which is my favorite. They are all near and dear to me. It means so much to me that I was able to be a leader in the fight to save the those missions in Rome in the 2005 BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) process. I didn’t do it by myself, I was part of a team.”

(Boehlert also is proud of the American Competitiveness Initiative, which provides money for teaching math and science to improve America’s competitive edge globally. President Bush mentioned it in his State of the Union):

“Sitting in the chamber when the president gives the State of the Union speech, and knowing that he’s coming up to a point where he is going to announce something that you’ve worked on, to think that some of the things I have contributed have had an impact far beyond our borders of this Congressional district, but literally nationally, is a very gratifying thing.”

Any regrets? Things you wish you could be there for?

“I don’t engage in that because I’m not presumptuous enough to think that little old me is going to make the big difference in the big picture. I’ve got it started and it’s well on it’s way and not only did he talk about it in his speech, the numbers are in the budget. ...

“We want those troops over in Iraq to be able to leave a country where there is more stability and where there is less terrorism and where there is a greater ability of Iraqis to take care of Iraq and come home. I don’t want them to come home too soon, despite that they’re in harm’s way, or all would be for naught. ...

“I want people to recognize that global warming is for real, it’s not just a figment of my imagination, I was down to the South Pole and they’ve got some of the foremost experts in the world doing research on the conditions. And they say global climate change is forcing the melting of all this area in the South Pole.”

How do you feel right now?

“I’m in the barber shop (at Union Station right before the announcement) and they wanted to hold me back there until 3 o’clock, because it was going to be live on TV, and Jack Williams came in. Jack and I

were in kindergarten, we used to play together when we were kids, now he's the county's public works commissioner. He came in and he started talking and he teared up and, boy, I started tearing up and so there's this emotion."

What message or advice do you have for whomever succeeds you?

"I'll work with you and for you to make sure we have good representation."

Keith Brown. 2006. **"Assembly OKs Authority for Fort Site."** Asbury Park (NJ) Press (March 17): 13.

Trenton -- The state Assembly Thursday passed a bill outlining an authority to direct the redevelopment of Fort Monmouth that was criticized by local officials who said they felt misled about portions of the legislation.

The Assembly voted 70-6 in favor of the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority Act, a bill introduced on Feb. 27 by Assemblyman Michael Panter, D-Monmouth. A similar bill -- sponsored by state Sens. Ellen Karcher, D-Monmouth, and Joseph M. Kyrillos Jr., R-Monmouth -- passed in the Senate on Monday.

"This bill is an effort to bring together local, county, state, private business and others to help plan for the fort's future," Panter said before the vote. "Hopefully we can turn this tremendous loss into a tremendous opportunity."

Some provisions in the Assembly version -- including how professionals hired by the authority can be paid -- differ from the

Senate bill, so the Assembly bill now goes back before the Senate.

The Assembly bill, like the Senate version, calls for a 10-member authority charged with directing redevelopment for the fort site. The authority includes four gubernatorial appointments, the head of the state Commerce, Economic Growth and Tourism Commission, one member chosen by the Monmouth County Board of Freeholders and the mayors of Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls.

But a provision in both bills strips local mayors of the ability to select a voting designee in the event they cannot attend authority meetings. That ability, included in both bills when they were introduced last month, was taken out of each of the final versions.

"That's terrible," said Eatontown Mayor Gerald J. Tarantolo, who said he believed the provision to appoint a designee was in the final version of both bills. "I feel I've been misled."

Panter in an interview late Thursday defended the language he said he added to the Assembly bill this week.

"At the end of the day what we're asking is that people appointed to the committee show up for work," he said. "This is consistent with every authority in the state."

But the bill allows a provision for the secretary of the commerce department to appoint a voting designee.

"It might not be a big deal if we were using a level playing field," said Tinton Falls Mayor Peter Maclearie. "But I don't think we're using a level field."

Prior to Thursday's vote, Assemblyman Steve Corodemus and Assemblywoman Jennifer Beck, both R-Monmouth, criticized the provision.

And Corodemus, who failed in an attempt to have the bill amended to include the designee ability for the local mayors, called the bill a "bitter pill to swallow." for local mayors, who comprise a minority on the redevelopment authority.

"Imagine if you will that you're a mayor or a councilman," he said, speaking on the Assembly floor before the vote. "The redevelopment authority replaces the jurisdiction of planning and zoning boards and transfers 100 percent of those rights to the redevelopment authority."

A federal panel in September recommended closing the 89-year-old Army post in an effort to streamline the armed forces and save money.

The bulk of Fort Monmouth's research-and-development mission will move to the Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground in Aberdeen, Md.

The fort is an estimated \$3.2 billion economic engine statewide that employs more than 5,000 civilian and military personnel.

Keith Brown: (732) 643-4076 or
kbrown@app.com

Eileen Sullivan. 2006. **"Federal Preparedness, Military Officials May Soon Populate Regional FEMA Offices."**
CQ Homeland Security (March 16).

The country may finally see federal homeland security officials in regional

offices, although not in the same way members of Congress envisioned those offices four years ago.

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has committed to building on the existing 10 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions by adding federal preparedness and military officials to the offices. Chertoff has told lawmakers a plan could be ready as early as this spring.

State and local officials have continued to call for more DHS presence in regions across the country.

"You can't run it all from Washington, D.C.," said Eric E. Holdeman, director of King County, Wash., emergency management office. "To me the single most thing that could improve the readiness of the nation would be the Department of Homeland Security having regional offices in place, coordinating homeland security sub-agencies . . . If they had it up and running, I think we'd take a great leap forward."

Lawmakers have been asking for DHS' regional plan since 2003. The concept of establishing homeland security regions across the country dates back to when DHS was created in 2002 (PL 107-296). The law mandated that DHS consolidate and co-locate the various regional offices of agencies that became part of the new department, such as Customs, the Coast Guard and Secret Service.

But this concept proved to be too political as lawmakers fought to have the consolidated offices within their own jurisdictions, similar to the screaming and fighting that erupts during BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) discussions.

“It was so political that you couldn’t really discuss it,” said James Carafano, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation.

On Feb. 2, 2004, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee received a report from DHS outlining the department’s plans for consolidating regional offices. DHS said it was still in the “preliminary” stages of analysis.

By the time former DHS Secretary Tom Ridge left at the end of 2004, DHS had a detailed plan of multi-state regions and was waiting for congressional approval. Ridge said in a Dec. 13, 2005 Washington Times op-ed.

Shelved

But after Chertoff took over the department a year ago, the original plan of having “mini DHSs” across the country was shelved. The need for regional coordination, however, did not disappear.

In July 2005, when Chertoff discussed his reorganization plans for DHS, he said there could be small regional offices or a few DHS officials in some of the existing regional centers.

“What we [are] envisioning is a nimble and small-scale approach to this kind of coordination that focuses on network rather than a large kind of bureaucratic layer that will be between the individual state officials and the top management in Washington,” Chertoff said during a July 25, 2005, House Homeland Security Committee hearing.

Implementing such a plan, however, just wasn’t a department priority until Hurricane Katrina, Carafano said.

The shelved homeland security region plan could have helped the Katrina response, Ridge said in the December op-ed. In the plan, New Orleans, for instance, was to be a regional hub. “Had that hub been in place, trusted relationships among federal, state and local partners would have spirited life-saving actions sooner rather than later,” Ridge wrote. “We would have had knowledge of state and local contingency plans and associated gaps.”

Investigations into the government’s bungled response to Katrina came to the same conclusion: Regional coordination could have improved the Katrina response. The White House’s report on the federal response to Katrina calls for homeland security regions that would manage and coordinate all preparedness activities for any emergency. It also recommends that the regional directors be experienced and able to step into the position of the principle federal official to coordinate the federal response when a disaster strikes.

Just two months until the next hurricane season, lawmakers continue to press Chertoff about these regions.

“Any plan to repair the systemic failures in the Department of Homeland Security must include the establishment [of] regional offices,” Sen. Daniel K. Akaka, D-Hawaii, said in an e-mail to CQ Homeland Security. “Having a permanent, consolidated DHS office in the Gulf Region may have prevented some of the response failures to Hurricane Katrina by establishing a stronger pre-existing relationship between DHS and state and local officials and by providing one DHS point of contact.” Akaka said he’s happy Chertoff is addressing this issue, but it’s still not clear what the regions will be like.

New Details

In a speech to the National League of Cities on March 14, Chertoff outlined more details of the regions plan.

“Using our FEMA regions as a kind of headquarters or core cells, we’re going to be adding preparedness people, and we’re going to be bringing some military planners in, so we can build comprehensive plans with mayors and governors close to the ground,” Chertoff said.

King County, Wash., emergency management director Holdeman said the FEMA regions used to have preparedness officials before the agency was dismantled under DHS. FEMA no longer oversees preparedness, but Holdeman and other emergency management officials agree that a strong disaster response requires a strong disaster preparedness. So if Chertoff wants to assign “preparedness officials” to the FEMA regions, it can only help, Holdeman said. “You need a convening authority, not somebody who dictates, but somebody who pulls folks together,” he said.

Eileen Sullivan can be reached at
esullivan@cq.com

Phillip McGowan. 2006. **“Planners Add Baltimore to BRAC Equation.”** The Baltimore (MD) Sun (March 14): 2B.

City’s Housing and Infrastructure Might Accommodate Influx of Defense Workers

As state and local officials focus on ways to house and move thousands of defense-sector workers bound for the region, some have begun focusing on Baltimore - with its

abundance of affordable housing and established transportation network - as a way to handle the growth.

Representatives of the counties in and around Fort Meade and Aberdeen Proving Ground said at a meeting yesterday that they are taking a regional approach to confronting the potential sprawl generated by the Pentagon’s base realignment and closure process, known as BRAC, which is expected to draw 40,000 to 60,000 private- and public-sector jobs to Maryland within the next six years.

Although officials have concentrated on the roads, schools and homes needed to meet the needs of two heavily affected installations - Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County and Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County - officials are increasingly turning their attention to what Baltimore City has to offer.

Clarence T. Bishop, chief of staff to Mayor Martin O’Malley, acknowledged after his testimony to the regional planning group that “the city has been on the periphery [of the BRAC discussion] because the growth is taking place at Aberdeen and Fort Meade.”

‘No Way around Us’

As far as Baltimore’s place in the discussion of BRAC growth, Bishop said: “There is no way around us.”

Harford County Executive David R. Craig, a Republican, referred to Baltimore as “no longer a hole in the doughnut.” He said he expected the city to play a role in a regional marketing partnership recently established among Baltimore, Harford and Cecil counties.

Discussion of the city's role came at the most recent gathering of the Maryland Military Installation Strategic Planning Council, a consortium of local, state and federal officials overseeing military growth in Maryland. The meeting was held in Crownsville in Anne Arundel County.

While jurisdictions from Prince George's to Cecil counties are preparing for billions of dollars of infrastructure upgrades to accommodate the growth from BRAC, city officials emphasized that Baltimore's existing infrastructure could accommodate 170,000 new residents - a goal city officials hope to achieve in the next decade.

Leaders in Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties also said that concentrations of affordable housing exist within their jurisdictions. Many of those areas are in older, established neighborhoods such as Glen Burnie, or in shuttered industrial areas such as in Middle River.

Bishop said the city's location between Fort Meade and Aberdeen makes it a convenient place to house workers from both the south and north and provide them with accessible commuting options. There was little discussion of the city's troubled school system, which has grappled with low-performing schools, budget shortfalls and a court order over special education.

Urban Attractions

Rather, state officials pointed to the urban charms and cultural diversity that Baltimore offers in attracting families from New Jersey, where jobs are being shifted from Fort Monmouth to Aberdeen, and Northern Virginia, which is losing jobs to Fort Meade. They also said the thousands of abandoned rowhouses could provide a sanctuary of affordable housing for less-affluent families

who might be displaced by the influx of high-paying defense jobs.

Bishop said the city's population decline has leveled off, and he pointed to some \$10 billion in private development since 2000 within Baltimore as a sign of the city's rebirth. He estimated that an additional \$2.5 billion will be spent there within the next two years.

Anne Arundel County Executive Janet S. Owens, a Democrat, spoke yesterday of partnering with several surrounding jurisdictions to bring a regional focus to managing growth.

"We need Howard County, Baltimore City and Prince George's County," she said, adding that Anne Arundel County was in a good position "at this point."

Owens has submitted a bill to the County Council to form a growth committee for the Fort Meade area. Howard County Executive James N. Robey will soon appoint a similar panel by executive order, said Richard W. Story, chief executive of Howard's Economic Development Authority.

Other regional committees addressing needs around Aberdeen have already begun developing a list of road, water and sewer improvements, from Baltimore to Cecil counties.

State and local leaders stressed that the projections of job gains are still changing, and that the estimated 60,000 new jobs won't translate into 60,000 workers - and their families - coming into the state. Some workers in Northern Virginia, for example, could commute to Fort Meade.

Officials said yesterday they hope to redirect a portion of the state's deep pool of high-

tech workers from jobs in the Washington area to Maryland.

Joseph W. Rutter Jr., Anne Arundel County's planning director, said, "We are really looking to shorten commutes rather than moving people."

phill.mcgowan@baltsun.com

Lynne Jeter. 2006. **"Lowndes County Pursuing Second Mega Deal."** Mississippi Business Journal 28/9 (February 27): 1.

Columbus - Earlier this month, Lowndes County supervisors agreed to take action toward issuing \$23 million in bonds for The Crossroads, a 1,958-acre megasite west of the Golden Triangle Regional Airport (GTRA) that officials hope to soon have certified automotive-ready by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

After a 30-day public comment period, the bond issue would be ready on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, and the county would have 24 months to issue the bonds for the site located near the SeverCorr plant now under construction. The bond proceeds would purchase the property and fund basic infrastructure and site preparation work.

"We didn't have any problem the last time we did this (for the first TVA-certified megasite), and we don't anticipate any problems this go-round," said Joe Higgins, CEO of The LINK.

Last month, when speculation intensified about Korean-based Hyundai seeking alternate sites in the South for its first American Kia plant, Higgins said The Crossroads, which is all under option, is "probably the cheapest site to develop in

Mississippi. In a time when the state's budget is under pressure and dealing with Katrina, it's a bargain."

Even if Kia does not consider the Columbus site, officials are optimistic about selling the site to companies wanting to benefit from the Gulf Opportunity (GO) Zone created by Congress in December to spark development in the recovery of Hurricane Katrina. Lowndes County is one of the northern-most counties in the designated area. According to the federal legislation, new buildings must be completed by the end of 2008.

"A lot of companies come in and pick a site and spend literally weeks and months deciding how long everything will take," said Higgins. "We've already completed a critical path timeline for everything that's got to be done in the project. For example, if an automotive assembly plant selects our site on April 1, they'll be producing vehicles by August 29, 2008. Everything's already mapped out for them."

Last week, after the Mississippi Business Journal went to press, Hyundai Kia Automotive Group chairman MongKoo Chung was reportedly in Montgomery, Ala., crossing sites off the short list of candidates for the \$1.2-billion plant that would employ up to 2,500 workers. Industry watchers expect an announcement in March.

"Kia's been looking longer than most," said Higgins. "It hasn't been that long ago that the time an automotive site began looking and picked a site was 12 months. The pundits tell us that process has shortened to four to six months. So any company coming in is going to want someone who can strike quick."

A Banner Year

Last year was a banner one for The LINK, which shepherded five major projects into the Golden Triangle area, including SeverCorr, one of the year's largest economic development coups in North America in 2005. Last May, officials breathed a sigh of relief when the Pentagon proposed additional personnel and mission for the Columbus Air Force Base instead of closing the military operation.

"If we'd lost our base, we'd have taken one or two steps forward and three or four steps back," said Higgins. "Plus, we get to grow the base. That's good stuff."

The projects underway in the Golden Triangle area in 2005 represent investments totaling \$821 million and the creation of more than 1,200 jobs in an area that features 261,000 residents located within a 50-minute drive. This lineup excludes American Eurocopter, which won a \$75-million, five-year government contract just as it was settling into a new 85,500-square-foot manufacturing facility at the GTRA.

The subsidiary of Eurocopter, the world's largest manufacturer of commercial helicopters, and European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company (EADS) North America won the contract to support the Department of Homeland Security by supplying more than 55 aircraft to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency.

On a Mission

SteelCorr, Aurora, Baldor, Tally Defense Systems and a project called Pacesetter represented the five projects being groomed in 2005. In one instance, Ford and Higgins signed a deal in record time with a company that had publicly hinted about locating across state lines.

"The SteelCorr guys walked into our office on October 14, and said they needed to close a deal by January 28," recalled Columbus Lowndes County Economic Development Association (CLEDA) executive director Charleigh Ford. "We worked like crazy to get everything done."

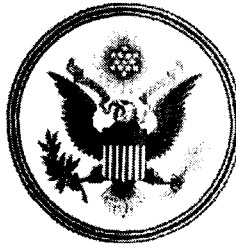
Higgins reiterated that expediting the development of The Crossroads was not solely for the benefit of Kia.

"A lot of people think all we're working is Kia, and that's not true," said Higgins. "Since we've controlled The Crossroads site, we've had three separate companies' hands in active search right now. You can't underscore enough the low cost development site that ours is. Quite frankly, we intend to be the next megasite location in Mississippi period. That's our goal, our mission and what we're working for. Nothing less than that."

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Christopher Lee. 2006. **“Competitive Sourcing.”** The Washington Post (March 23): A21.

Remember competitive sourcing? That’s President Bush’s initiative to examine whether jobs done by federal employees could be performed more efficiently by private contractors.

Bush called it his top management priority when he took office in 2001, saying federal workers should compete with contractors for as many as 850,000 government jobs that are considered commercial, jobs as diverse as janitorial services and computer network design.

It has gone far less smoothly, and far more slowly, than the White House had hoped,

with fewer than 50,000 jobs studied by the end of 2005. And federal workers have won the job competitions more than 80 percent of the time.

Even so, many federal employees still quake at the prospect of their jobs moving to the private sector. The latest example came yesterday at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where about 70 people protested plans to contract out the jobs of 350 workers, including carpenters, electricians and security employees.

The workers and their union, the American Federation of Government Employees, say their winning bid was unfairly tossed out; that the job competition, announced during the Clinton administration, took longer than regulations allow; and that the Army, in breaking the deadlines, spent money not authorized by Congress.

“We’re going to continue fighting this legislatively,” said John Threlkeld, an AFGE lobbyist.

Management agreed yesterday to put off a decision for several months. Even if the workers save their jobs, their worries won’t end. The historic hospital in Northwest Washington is scheduled to be shut down in 2011 as part of the federal base-closing process.

Anthony Cronin. 2006. **“More Than 100 Jobs Locally Could Be Lost If Navy Makes Switch to Norfolk.”** The Day (New London, CT) (March 22).

Nine northeastern members of Congress are urging the Navy’s top officer to block any attempts to move its northeast regional command from Groton to Norfolk, Va.

In a bipartisan letter sent to Adm. Michael Mullen, the Navy's chief of naval operations, the congressional delegation said the northeast regional command needs to remain at the Naval Submarine Base in Groton because of its numerous naval responsibilities across New England and mid-Atlantic states.

The letter was signed by U.S. Reps. Rob Simmons, Nancy Johnson and Christopher Shays, all Connecticut Republicans, and Rosa DeLauro, a Democrat from Connecticut, as well as Democrats James Langevin and Patrick Kennedy from Rhode Island. In addition, U.S. Reps. John Sweeney, a Republican from New York; Charles Bass, a Republican from New Hampshire, and Christopher Smith, a New Jersey Republican, also signed the letter.

The Navy is weighing a move of its northeast regional command to Norfolk, Va., where it already has a significant surface ship and submarine naval presence. The move to consolidate the northeast regional command with those in Virginia grew out of this summer's base closings and consolidation process.

The Pentagon in May proposed shutting down the Groton submarine base, but that decision was overturned by an independent base-closings review panel in August. But the commission staff included a technical amendment during those August hearings that called for the Groton regional command to be moved to Virginia.

Simmons has been pushing to keep the northeast command in Groton because the Groton base was saved from closing, along with the Portsmouth naval shipyard in Kittery, Maine. Simmons and the other congressional members are worried that the

realignment of the regional command to Norfolk will result in the loss of more than 100 jobs locally.

Groton has about 8,500 naval jobs, and Portsmouth has about 4,500 Navy positions, resulting in a combined work force of more 12,900. In addition, the Newport, R.I., naval installations could see an increase in personnel of up to 25 percent.

If the regional command were moved to Norfolk from Groton, it would be nearly 500 miles from the Groton base as well as more than 500 miles from the Newport, R.I., naval facilities. Portsmouth would be about 630 miles away, compared to about 160 miles from Groton.

In their letter to Mullen, the nine members of Congress said they want to see a "documented business case" analysis of the move from Groton to Norfolk. They also said such a move would not meet the needs of the service in both New England and the mid-Atlantic regions.

They also told Mullen they want to ensure that a "significant" headquarters presence remains in Groton if the Navy were to move some regional command functions to the Norfolk naval facilities.

The letter also points out the northeast regional command in Groton has responsibilities for two nuclear-certified facilities: the Groton sub base and the Portsmouth shipyard, a Navy-owned facility that repairs nuclear-attack subs.

But if those operations were combined with existing Norfolk area commands, it would result in supervision of four nuclear-certified facilities. The letter to Mullen said that existing naval regional commands now have

no more than two nuclear-certified sites under each jurisdiction.

Paige Austin. 2006. **"Area Leaders Party after Base Is Saved."** The Press-Enterprise (Redding, CA) (March 22): B1.

Naval Center Avoided Closure

Norco – It started as a survivors' party, but it ended up a celebration in irony.

The employees at the Naval Surface Warfare Center and regional community leaders gathered Tuesday to celebrate the base's last-minute reprieve during last year's round of military base realignments and closures.

The bash was held the day after the Base Realignment and Closure commission officially closed office.

The announcement was met with roaring applause from base employees and community leaders who were instrumental in the fight to convince the commission to keep the base open.

The party at the Lake Norconian clubhouse included more than 100 base employees and Congressman Ken Calvert, Corona Mayor Karen Spiegel, Riverside Mayor Ron Loveridge, Norco Mayor Kathy Azevedo and past mayor Frank Hall. Employees and community leaders involved in the retention efforts wore blue and red "survivor" T-shirts that said, "Outlast, Outwit, Outplay."

"We're really just kind of celebrating getting the job done and getting all this behind us," said John Fishell, technical operations manager at the base. "The Navy and the Department of Defense validated the need

for what we do here, and we just want the employees to know we value them."

In May, "on Friday the 13th," the officials with the closure commission recommended moving the Norco base to Ventura County, noted Captain Robert A. Shafer, commanding officer at the base.

After that, base staffers and community leaders worked at a frantic pace to convince military leaders that the independent assessment done at the base is crucial to the war effort.

The warfare center tests and evaluates a wide variety of missile, bomb and radar systems before they are issued to various military branches. The Pentagon's plans to relocate the base would have meant that most base employees would have had to move or look for new jobs.

However, in August the base was taken off the base closure list.

The overall economic impact to the region of closing the Norco facility would exceed \$300 million, according to a 2003 study by Inland economist John Husing.

On Tuesday, Norco's mayor thanked the base employees for the contributions to local businesses.

"We have 70 drive-through, fast-food restaurants in the area of Norco," Azevedo told the employees. "I don't know what we would have done without you."

"This community has been so good to us," said 34-year base employee Ernest Carter II. "A lot of us old-timers have our children going through the school system here. This is where our family is. This is our home."

Staff. 2006. **“An Oceana Offer the Navy Can’t Refuse.”** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 22).

With just a few weeks to go before a major deadline, the shape of Virginia Beach’s response to the ultimatum over Oceana Naval Air Station seems clear, at least in outline:

- The city will ban new homes at the ends of Oceana’s runways, and drastically limit them under the flight path between the base and a practice strip in Chesapeake.

- The city will adjust the kinds of building permitted at the Oceanfront.

- n The city will entice busy, crowded businesses around the base to move outside the crash zones, and encourage low-impact businesses to move in.

- The city will spend millions to do all that, at least the \$15 million yearly the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission demanded.

For all the anger and confusion that followed BRAC’s ultimatum last summer, Virginia Beach’s politicians responded with cool calculation for what’s in the city’s best interest. To a degree that would have appeared impossible just six months ago, their plan has unified business, neighborhood and political factions that almost always are at odds.

If it is followed, it should more than accomplish what the Navy wants.

What the city – and the state – won’t do, is this: “enact state and local legislation and ordinances [sic] to establish a program to

condemn and purchase all the incompatible use property located within the Accident Potential Zone 1 areas ...”

City and state officials have had months to parse the BRAC condemnation order and have concluded it doesn’t really mean what it means. Only the lawyers can explain why, so it is open to argument. It also may not matter.

A new state law will allow condemnation in the crash zones, but only if owners ask for it. The city plans to do little to get houses out from under the jets. Those two facts make it clear that Virginia Beach probably won’t comply with the letter of the BRAC order.

Property rights matter more in Virginia Beach than in many places, and there was no chance that the City Council would ever have voted for the kind of sweeping condemnation program the BRAC order seems to demand.

Instead, the city will use regulations to freeze encroachments where they can, buy out the ones they can’t and finesse everything else in the gray zone.

Whether that will be enough to satisfy the Defense Department’s inspector general, who will pass judgment on the city’s compliance with BRAC, is an open question.

But, again, it might not matter since Jacksonville, BRAC’s first choice, begged off after a torrid courtship.

There is, quite simply, no place for the Navy to go, not without squandering millions or billions of dollars it doesn’t have.

Adm. Mike Mullen, the chief of naval operations, says he’s encouraged by the

plans. But he also says that any more encroachment will doom the base.

Add that to the list of conflicting or incoherent messages that have all but emptied the reservoir of Navy good will at the Beach.

This one seems to say that the Beach has pleased at least some of the Navy brass. That's good, because keeping the encroachment from getting worse was about all the city could realistically do.

The inspector general will have his say in June, but given the situation, it looks like Virginia Beach's effort might be just enough to keep Oceana's jets flying. At least for now. The future, and the ultimate fate of the base, of course, remain much less clear.

Bill Geroux. 2006. **"Oceana Battle May Take Years."** The Richmond (VA) Times-Dispatch (March 19): B4.

If Virginia Beach's Plans to Save Base Are Rejected, Appeals, Suits May Follow

The city has to declare by March 31 how far it will go to prune back the suburbs from Oceana Naval Air Station to keep its jets and jobs. City leaders and their representatives in Congress conferred last week in Washington.

But even if Virginia Beach's plans are rejected by the Department of Defense's inspector general's office, the city appears to have appeals available – including a federal lawsuit – that could go on for several years.

And the threat of losing the jets to Jacksonville, Fla., lost credibility last fall,

when the Jacksonville City Council announced that the city did not want the noisy jets after all.

The struggle over Oceana's jets is without precedent in the base-closing process, said Gary Comerford, a spokesman for inspector general's office, which has never before been called upon to decide such a case. "We're completely new turf."

Virginia Beach's save-the-jets plan, developed with the state and the city of Chesapeake, includes new ordinances to halt development in the primary crash zones near Oceana's runways; tax incentives for businesses that move out of the area; more restrictive zoning in areas of loud jet noise; and the purchase of land and development rights to land under flight paths between Oceana and the outlying Fentress landing field in Chesapeake.

City spokesmen argue that Virginia Beach is promising to do more, on balance, than the base-closing commission demanded. But Virginia Beach has refused to comply with the commission's toughest order: that the city start buying up and condemning thousands of homes and hundreds of businesses in the crash zones closest to the jet base.

The base-closing commission gave the inspector general's office until June 1 to either certify the local plan for Oceana or move on to inspecting Cecil Field in Jacksonville for its fitness to accept the jets. The deadline for certifying Cecil Field would be June 2007.

Sen. John W. Warner, R-Va., was temporarily at a loss for words when asked what would happen if the inspector general rejects the plan for Oceana. "I'd like to

reflect on that," said Warner, the Senate Armed Services Committee chairman.

Warner initially said he doesn't think the issue will come before Congress, but then he thought again. "Don't rule out the possibility that Congress might do something," Warner said. "This is just such a national asset, this thing is just so important to our whole country, in our military posture, that it seems to me we've just got to make the right decision for the nation."

Despite Jacksonville's public withdrawal from the fight, Virginia Beach "is not at all comfortable that Florida is out of the picture," said William Macali, a deputy city attorney. He noted that Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, who first lobbied to bring the jets to Jacksonville, has not publicly given up the idea. The South Texas town of Kingsville also has made a public bid for a squadron of Oceana jets. But the base-closing commission mentioned only Jacksonville.

Virginia Beach could challenge an unfavorable ruling by the inspector general's office with a federal lawsuit, Macali said. Such a suit and various appeals could take years to play out, he said.

In the meantime, the Navy says it prefers to keep the jets at Oceana if suburban encroachment can be curtailed. Finding a new home for Oceana's more than 200 F/A-18 Super Hornet fighters could prove difficult. For three years, the Navy has been trying to build a practice airfield for the jets in rural Washington County, N.C., but has been stymied by an environmental lawsuit.

Oceana's 12,000 jobs make it the largest employer in Virginia Beach. But tension between the city and the Navy has grown over the past two decades, as Virginia Beach grew into Virginia's most populous city and

Oceana evolved into the Navy's main jet base on the East Coast.

In August, the base-closing commission ordered Virginia Beach to start spending at least \$15 million a year to condemn and purchase homes and most businesses in the primary crash zones or lose the jets to Jacksonville.

The Virginia Beach City Council was still pondering whether to launch such a costly and unpopular campaign when Jacksonville bowed out. Council members subsequently said they were not willing to seize those homes and businesses, many of which were built before Oceana became a major jet base.

Contact staff writer Bill Geroux at wgeroux@timesdispatch.com or (757) 625-1358.

Times-Dispatch Washington correspondent Peter Hardin contributed to this report.

Staff, 2006. "A Down Payment for Next BRAC." The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 17): B10.

It'll cost each of us 40 cents a year, but the potential benefits are priceless.

For less than the cost of this newspaper, the region plans to create the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance, charged with protecting the area's military bases from predation by other states and cities.

As the Pentagon heads deeper into the 21st century, officials will be under more * not less * pressure to trim costs. Among other things, that will mean additional military

facilities will close, taking jobs and lives with them.

If the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission worked as it was supposed to, politics would have been drained from the process of deciding which bases are shut. But, as Hampton Roads learned last year, BRAC isn't working the way it is supposed to.

Overruling the recommendations of the military brass, BRAC commissioners sought to punish Virginia Beach for decades of inattention to the growing crowd of houses and businesses around Oceana Naval Air Station.

It probably helped, too, that Florida was lobbying * concertedly, and with considerable practice * to move Oceana's jets to an idled airfield near Jacksonville. And that Virginia's presentation to keep the jets flying in Virginia Beach was almost entirely lacking in polish or heft.

So far, Oceana's jets appear poised to remain at Oceana, thanks in part to the fact that the people of Jacksonville don't want them.

In other words, despite the disappointing loss of military facilities on the Peninsula * including historic Fort Monroe * Hampton Roads appears to have emerged from this BRAC round mostly intact. Uncomfortably, that good fortune appears to be at least partially the result of missteps elsewhere, not our own virtues.

That's what this Alliance could change.

In offices next to the Hampton Roads Partnership, the Alliance will operate on a \$1.25 million budget, about half of which would come from 13 area municipalities, and half from the state. Among other things, the Alliance would hire a lobbyist in

Washington to make sure this region's military assets are protected.

The effort includes every city and county between Oceana and Williamsburg. Thankfully, Virginia Beach appears to have abandoned plans for a parallel lobbying effort, helping assure the Alliance speaks with one voice.

In a region where cross-border cooperation is hard to come by, efforts like the Alliance show what is possible. If it's successful, it might provide a welcome model * for transportation, for education, for public safety * of what can happen if only we trade our parochial interests for our shared ones.

Unattributed. 2006. **"Regional Officials Tour Sites Marked for Growth."** U.S. Marine Corps News (March 17).

Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA * Nearly 30 members of the Prince William Regional Chamber of Commerce toured the construction site of the Heritage Center's National Museum of the Marine Corps and took a windshield bus tour of the west side of the base where the addition of an expected 3,400 personnel will be relocated as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Act.

The purpose of the tour was to show the members, some of whom are retired military members, what improvements were made to the 134-acre tract of land PWCC donated to Marine Corps Base Quantico.

The tour began at the construction site of the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

At the first area of interest, the tourists viewed a detailed overview of the area around the perimeter of the museum where memorials are to be constructed.

The guide, retired Col. Joseph Long, project manager of the Heritage Center, led the tourists into a large, unfinished, glass-crowned room, which will become the museum's central exhibit gallery.

Through the noise and impediment of construction, the tourists observed the empty building as a walking floor plan while Long provided a visual narration.

Upon exiting the central exhibit gallery, the observers walked through a 16-foot-wide hallway which stands as an entry into a series of historical war exhibit areas.

Long explained the ideas of the exhibits and their retrospective innovation to make prior and existing service members relive and gain a better perspective on combat through a war veteran's experience.

One tourist, retired Marine Capt. Michael R. Janay, said seeing the unfinished Vietnam exhibit brought back memories of when he was there in 1966.

"I think the exhibit will bring back memories for those who were there," Janay said. "It will also teach the younger generation that we paid the price for our freedom and our future."

After the visitors exited the museum, they returned to the bus and were transported to the west side of the base for a visual tour of the area where proposed organizations will relocate as part of BRAC.

Chuck Rushing, director of Facilities Division for Marine Corps Base, narrated the tour and explained Base Realignment and Closure as the tourists enjoyed viewing the sites from their seats.

"Several agencies are relocating from leased spaces onto Quantico due to the base's

proximity, which will increase the bases population by 3,000 to 4,000," Rushing said. "There will be 160,000 square feet utilized by the agencies."

Rushing answered many of the tourists questions about the affects of the population increase.

Once the tour concluded, the bus proceeded to The Clubs at Quantico for lunch.

Col. James Lowe, commander of Marine Corps Base Quantico, presented the flag flown at the National Museum of the Marine Corps to the PWRCC members as a token of appreciation for their support to the base.

Donna L Sneeling, chairwoman of the Prince William Regional Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, then presented a plaque to Lowe for the base's community service.

"We appreciate the opportunity to be able to support the museum and other programs that go on aboard the base," Sneeling said.

Doug Kesseli, 2006, "**Community Faces Uncertainty with Mill Closure.**" Bangor (ME) Daily News (March 17): 6.

Businesses, Schools Feel Effects of News

Old Town * These days, florist Brenda Festerman is getting a lot of requests for flower baskets filled with daisies, tulips and carnations that herald the change of seasons.

"It gives them a nice outlook that spring is coming," she said Thursday afternoon.

For those who live or work in Old Town, though, any thoughts of spring likely were taking a back seat Thursday to news that the Georgia-Pacific Corp. paper mill * which

accounts for about one-third of the city's tax base * was closing.

The closure will have a ripple effect in town, from the schools attended by the children of millworkers and where spouses teach to the downtown shops.

"This place is going to be a ghost town" if the mill isn't replaced, Labasis, 38, a resident of the neighboring Penobscot Indian reservation, predicted as he picked up a sandwich Thursday afternoon at a Subway shop downtown.

Gary Dupray, owner of Gary's Discount Center, which sells furniture, decorations, household items, tools and knick-knacks, said he already is starting to feel the impact. Sales began to drop off by about 25 percent two weeks ago when there were reports that G-P planned to close the mill that employs about 400 people.

People are getting scared and holding off making some purchases until they know more or things improve, he said.

"They want to wait and see what tomorrow brings," said Dupray, who has run his store downtown for 20 years and has weathered shutdowns and cutbacks. The mill once employed 1,100 to 1,200 employees, he said.

Dupray said he expects it will get worse before it gets better, and sales could be off by 40 percent at his store before it levels off and improves.

Another downtown store owner, who didn't want to be identified, said he too will likely feel the pinch from the closure and has a lot of sympathy for the workers. Some have mortgages and some are paying for college for their children. Most, if not all, are finding themselves without jobs.

With the news breaking hours earlier, the businessman said the reality of the closure hasn't fully set in.

"We're all shellshocked," he said.

At Brenda's Florist & Gifts, Festerman said she hadn't heard of the closure but pointed out that she has a relative and many friends who work at the mill, and she's concerned for them.

"There are a lot of good, hardworking people there," she said.

Festerman, who opened her shop in August, isn't sure how she will be affected but said she realized that flowers are more a luxury than a necessity and will take a back seat to other expenditures.

School department officials already were preparing for the impact early Thursday afternoon, hours after the news broke.

Old Town school officials are assessing what the shutdown will mean to students, staff and the bottom line of the budget being developed, Old Town School Superintendent David Walker said.

"Our first concern is to provide for the needs of those people of our school family," Walker said Thursday from his office.

Losing a job can be stressful for family members, especially children, and counselors will be made available to anyone who needs them, the superintendent said.

"For young people, it can be a scary thing; they don't understand what it means when Dad loses a job," Walker said.

The school department also will look at ways to assist financially, providing free or low-cost meals, for example.

Meanwhile, with the mill accounting for such a large part of the tax base, the school department will be working with the city to see what, if any, changes will be needed in the budget, Walker said.

Throughout the community, uncertainty remained the word of the day.

Most of the millworkers at a local bar early Thursday afternoon didn't want to comment on the news.

But one worker, walking his dog along the Penobscot River, voiced frustration at the closure and the fact G-P employees have been working diligently to make improvements only to be shut down.

After 25 years working at the mill and 21/2 years since the last shutdown, the man, who did not want to be identified, said he has had enough and plans to look elsewhere for work.

"I told my wife, this is it," the man said.

Others haven't given up just yet.

Dupray said that after years of ups and downs, he is confident that things will improve.

"I do believe that someone is going to stand up and buy the plant again," he said.

State officials, addressing reporters at a press conference at the mill's training center, also were optimistic, with Gov. John Baldacci saying that the mill was closing only "temporarily."

Duane Lugdon, international representative of the United Steelworkers, which represents about 340 of the mill's 400 employees, left the press conference confident that with the support of the state, the mill will resume in some fashion.

"There is light at the end of the tunnel, and we're going to put this back together," he said.

Millworker Daniel Bird was at the press conference and shared some of that hope, but more guardedly.

"We're just cautiously optimistic," said Bird, 48, who has worked at the mill for more than 26 years, outlasting layoffs and downsizing and owners such as Diamond International, James River and Fort James.

His optimism was tempered, he said, with the recognition that times have changed and that the paper industry faces increased competition from abroad where labor and paper pulp are cheaper. With the Old Town mill being one of the smallest mills in G-P's stable, its future may not lie with a larger paper company bent on achieving economies of scale, but with a smaller company, Bird said.

Bob Sibley, 55, a retired contractor from Lincoln, was visiting Old Town's downtown Thursday when the news broke. He had some advice for millworkers and residents worried about the future of the mill.

Sibley's daughter and son-in-law work at the Lincoln paper mill and were there when it closed a year and a half ago, only to reopen, stronger and better.

"Keep your heads up even though it might not be so good now," he said.

Michael Felberbaum, 2006. "**Military Expansion a 'Pleasant Problem' for Struggling Virginia City.**" Associated Press Newswires (March 18, 00:00).

Petersburg, Va. (AP) – Real estate broker Mike Mahaney can already hear the troops marching on Fort Lee.

He's getting calls from the military men and women moving to the base because of an expansion announced last year by the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

"We can feel them coming now," said Mahaney, who has been in real estate for 33 years and has an office in nearby Hopewell. "And we can already see that with the number of people inundating the area, there are more people than places to put them."

The base 25 miles south of Richmond is expected to gain 7,344 people, essentially doubling the total at Fort Lee. Military and planning officials say most will begin arriving in 2009.

The community can also expect more than 4,400 private jobs to be created for base support, said U.S. Rep. J. Randy Forbes, R-Va.

The soldiers will bring a much-needed boost to an economically depressed area, but they also bring new challenges: families that need schools, housing, child care and jobs.

"It is a pleasant problem to face given that the alternative could have been much, much worse," said David Canada, Petersburg's city manager.

The alternative would have been removing jobs from the 5,850-acre base just east of the city, and that would have been a tough blow to an already struggling region.

January's unemployment rate for the area was 4.9 percent – down from 5.9 percent in January 2005, but still nearly 2 percentage

points above Virginia's rate, one of the nation's lowest.

Fort Lee, which trains Army support personnel ranging from supply clerks to cooks, contributes about \$862 million to the local economy.

"It is the economic engine in our region and will continue to be an even larger one," said Dennis K. Morris, executive director of the Crater Planning District Commission. "Fort Lee has the potential to transform our economy in this region."

Central Missouri's Fort Leonard Wood had a similar experience during the 1995 realignment, essentially doubling its force. Ron Selfors, then-deputy garrison commander, said the fort's economic impact went from \$800 million a year to \$1.2 billion.

The region saw a housing boom that continues today, major road construction projects and a doubling in population right outside the base's front gate.

Selfors, who visited Petersburg last October, believes the job additions will have a similar effect on the communities around Fort Lee. "They will have to work very hard to not benefit from this," he said.

Canada, Petersburg's city manager, said the primary challenge facing the tri-cities area, which includes Hopewell and Colonial Heights, will be the demand for affordable housing for junior military personnel.

Area officials are studying the expected impact on the area's seven school districts, housing and general quality of life. The need for child care, health care, entertainment and shopping also is being addressed.

“We know there’s going to be an impact, but we don’t know the magnitude as we sit here today,” Morris said.

Morris said that while the basic infrastructure is in place for water and sewer, transportation improvements are needed – not only to move people through the area, but to keep them secure.

The base is building a new main gate to meet Department of Homeland Security requirements. Officials on and off post are working to reconfigure the interchanges around the main gate.

Esther Lee, deputy garrison commander, said the expansion will bring increased military value to the base, which already trains the second largest group of soldiers after Fort Benning, Ga.

Most of the gains will come from shifting personnel from Fort Eustis in Newport News, Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, Redstone Arsenal in Alabama, Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, Defense Commissary Agency sites in Virginia Beach and San Antonio and Defense Contract Management Agency headquarters in Alexandria.

The expansion comes amid a renaissance outside the main gates in Petersburg’s Old Town district. Historic brick buildings and cobblestone streets once trod by Civil War troops are now filled with bustling art galleries, retail stores and loft apartments.

“There’s a really keen sense of history,” said Regan Sprenkle, whose family is renovating a building for retail and living space. “It doesn’t feel like it’s been erased in any way.”

In the 1970s, one-time tobacco giant Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp. had 38 tobacco warehouses lining railroad tracks in the city. A decade later, the company closed its Petersburg factory, laying off more than 5,000 workers.

The Petersburg area was dealt another blow from nature in 1993. Several tornadoes struck the area, including one with winds up to 200 mph, killing four people, injuring 238 and causing \$47.5 million in damage.

“It took literally years to address some of the damages that were inflicted,” said Canada. “It was a horrible setback.”

With the additions to Fort Lee, things seem to be looking up again, Morris said.

“It’s beginning to come together,” he said. “This is an area steeped in history, and it’s a very reasonable place to live.”

NEWS RELEASES from the United States Department of Defense

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17, 2006 Media Contact: (703)697-5131
Public Industry(703)428-0711

DoD Announces Installation Realignment in Luxembourg

The Department of Defense announced today that the United States will cease operations at the Army Prepositioned Site (APS) at Bettembourg, Luxembourg.

Due to U.S. European Command force structure realignment and transformation, and the attendant reduction in storage requirements that has occurred in the central region of Europe during the past several

years, the U.S. Army storage facility at Bettembourg has been identified as excess to the Army's needs and will begin the process to be returned to the host nation.

Consequently, U.S. operations at APS Bettembourg will cease by the end of September 2006.

This action is expected to save \$24.8 million annually.

As with all stationing actions, the U.S. has coordinated with host nation officials at all levels before this announcement.

For additional information regarding this announcement, please contact Army Field Support Brigade Europe public affairs at +49-621-487-5022.

Paulette Tobin. 2006. **"Official Says GF Could Afford to Give Taxpayers a Break."** Grand Forks (ND) Herald (March 16).

Does the Grand Forks School District need to have \$15 million in its reserve fund?

One School Board member, C.T. Marhula, is making the case that a one-year, one-time tax freeze on existing property * which he says could be made up in large part by drawing from a \$15 million ending fund balance * could give property taxpayers a break.

Other school district officials have said Marhula's plan would keep the School District from balancing next year's budget, with the district spending \$1 million more than it would take in. There are good reasons, school officials have said, for the

School Board to be cautious about dipping into the reserve.

Marhula's proposal, which he unveiled at Monday night's School Board meeting, called for reducing special assessments and reserves to cut about \$1.1 million * or about 8.63 additional mills * from the 2006-2007 budget. The School Board already has cut 6 mills.

"We can keep individual taxes (on existing property) exactly the same amount for next year without cutting one item from the proposed budget," Marhula wrote in his two-page presentation to the board.

District officials have said they wanted to keep the ending fund balance at 20 percent of the total budget, he said. Under next year's proposed budget, it would be 21 to 22 percent.

Marhula said a healthy ending fund balance was a good thing, and he acknowledged that under his proposal, the 2006-2007 budget would not be balanced. However, for one year, cuts could be made to freeze existing taxes, he said in an interview Wednesday.

"I'm not proposing continued use of the reserve," he said. "I'm proposing a one-time use which would still leave the reserve above our goal."

The ending fund balance, also called the reserve, is what the School District expects to have left when its fiscal year ends. For July 2006 and July 2007, the district expects that amount to be about \$15.1 million.

If the School Board decided that was more than enough, it could vote to dip into the reserve. However, there are some things to consider first, school officials said.

Caution Signs

Cash flow. One of the reasons for a reserve is so the School District can pay its bills between July and January while it's waiting for local tax dollars and federal impact aid. It's better to have money on hand earning interest than it is to have to borrow money and pay interest. Some years, the earned interest has been worth nine mills, School District finance officer Dean Kreitinger said.

Federal funding. Because federal impact aid to support the schools at Grand Forks Air Force Base is current-year funded, the school district starts each fiscal year without knowing how much money Congress will appropriate, Superintendent Mark Sanford said.

Congress didn't finish its business last fall, so the district * which had expected \$7 million in impact aid for the current school year * has so far received \$2.5 million, Sanford said.

"Even in the routine years, you don't know what impact aid will be," he said. "If it was cut, you'd have a reduced payment you would be receiving."

School repairs. The school has some needs that are not in the budget; for instance, repairing windows, roofs and parking lots.

"Thankfully, those are 30-or 40-year expenditures," Sanford said. "They are not built into budgets. But when you need them, where do you find the money to do it?"

Other revenue fluctuations. In upcoming months, the School District will find out how well its projected 2006-2007 budget numbers will jibe with the reality of federally funded programs like special education and Title I.

"Our indication is that this will be less than it was last year," Sanford said. "In our budget assumptions, we have projected several hundred thousand dollars less in federal funding. This is when we fill in the blanks in upcoming months."

By June, most hiring will be completed for the next school year, and officials will be more certain of enrollment, too. Those numbers determine what the district will pay in salaries and how much state aid it will get.

Consistency. A healthy fund balance means the district has less reason to panic over spikes in energy costs or the Base Realignment and Closure process. "Every year, something is going to come up," Kreitinger said. And, having a big fund balance is a "pleasant problem" to have, he said.

"If we have to transition through BRAC, we won't have that problem anymore, because the reserves won't be there any more," he said.

Marhula said he was a strong advocate of continuing the reserve, and that it would be "penny wise and pound foolish" to use it up and be forced to borrow. His proposal would be temporary, he said.

"It's not a reduction in taxes, it's a one-year freeze," Marhula said. "And I would expect taxes to go up based on increased valuation for some time in the future, even if the mill rate continues to drop."

Tobin reports on education, teen news and special events. Reach her at (701) 780-1134; (800) 477-6572, ext. 134; or ptobin@gfherald.com.

Unattributed. 2006. **“Oberndorf Touts Beach’s Efforts to Keep Jet Base.”** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 16).

Mayor Meyera Oberndorf told about 600 business leaders Wednesday that the city’s response to the threat to Oceana Naval Air Station goes above and beyond the requirements set by a federal base-closure commission.

Oberndorf said the city’s plan not only meets the mandate of the federal commission in a “balanced, fair, effective manner,” but also rolls back development more aggressively than required.

The mayor made her remarks in her annual State of the City speech at the Virginia Beach Convention Center.

Last year, the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission demanded that the state and city commit at least \$15 million a year to buy homes and businesses in the highest-risk accident-potential zones near the base.

If the city did not comply, the commission said, Oceana’s jets could be moved.

In December, the City Council adopted a range of measures to halt further growth around Oceana, but it rejected BRAC’s demand to create a program to buy and condemn homes and most businesses in the accident zones.

“The plan the council adopted on Dec. 20 did more in one day to stop the encroachment than the BRAC Commission’s suggested plan could do in a dozen years,” Oberndorf told an audience of Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce

members. “There is no question that our plan is a better way of achieving the BRAC’s stated objectives.”

Even if the city had agreed to condemn homes and businesses for \$15 million a year, Oberndorf said, the city could not clear the zone over 20 years.

Under BRAC’s proposed plan, she said, “There is actually the potential for more incompatibility than there was when we started. What kind of plan is that? It makes no sense.”

Oberndorf described the BRAC order as a “bombshell” dropped on the city, prompting “hundreds, maybe thousands” of callers voicing opinions about what the city should do.

“I’ve heard from people afraid of losing their homes if we comply and afraid of losing their businesses if we don’t comply,” she said. “I’ve also heard from people who have called me every name in the book * even those opinions at least show a passion for our city.”

“What I want to say to you * and to the citizens who might read this speech later * is simply: I heard you.”

The city has until March 31 to present its plan to the Defense Department’s inspector general, who will rule by June whether the city satisfied the BRAC requirements.

Reach Marisa Taylor at (757) 222-5108 or marisa.taylor@pilotonline.com.

Dale Eisman. 2006. **“Push to Keep Oceana Nears Hurdle.”** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 15): B12.

Continued commercial and residential growth around Oceana Naval Air Station "in any way, shape or form" ultimately would force the Navy to relocate its East Coast fighter jets, the service's top admiral warned Tuesday.

But with Virginia Beach and state officials facing a March 31 deadline to give the Pentagon a plan to roll back existing development near the base, Adm. Mike Mullen said he remains "encouraged" by state and local efforts to preserve Oceana.

Mullen, the chief of naval operations, told reporters he is "supportive of Oceana as the place for us in the future, given that there isn't any more encroachment."

The sprawling base near the Oceanfront is the Navy's largest East Coast airport and Virginia Beach's largest employer.

Once surrounded by farmland, it now is crowded by shopping centers and subdivisions that have forced arriving and departing jets to alter their flight paths, creating hazards * some pilots argue * to civilians on the ground and limiting the base's usefulness for flight training.

While underscoring his preference to stay at Oceana, Mullen stopped well short of predicting that the local growth-limiting initiatives will satisfy Thomas Gimble, the Defense Department's inspector general.

Under federal law, Gimble must decide by June whether the state and city have met requirements set last year by the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

The commission ordered state and local leaders to commit at least \$15 million per year to acquiring homes and businesses in

the highest-risk "accident potential zone" near the base.

Failure to comply could lead to relocation of Oceana's 200-plus F/A-18 Hornet and Super Hornet fighters to Cecil Field, a former Navy base near Jacksonville, Fla., the commission said.

City leaders in Virginia Beach say they think their plan will meet the commission's dictates, but they have refused to comply with an apparent requirement that their program include condemnation proceedings to acquire property from homeowners and businesses otherwise unwilling to sell.

The city is expected to complete action by March 28 on an incentive package aimed at encouraging commercial landowners in the accident zone to sell or convert their property to warehouses and other low-density uses the Navy says would not interfere with the base.

Gimble and members of his staff have met privately at least twice with city and state officials, including Gov. Timothy M. Kaine, to discuss the city and state initiatives.

Gimble has been mum about his view of those efforts and through a spokesman indicated early this month that he does not intend to hold public hearings on the plan.

Gimble's findings are due June 1.

Even if Gimble finds the city has not met the BRAC Commission's requirements, the Navy is likely to remain at Oceana for years. The city of Jacksonville, which owns the Cecil Field property and initially offered to return it to the Navy to redevelop the base, has since backed away from that plan.

The BRAC process gives the city until the end of December to reconsider its position and submit a new proposal for reviving the base, however.

If it does, Gimble would have until June 2007 to review its plan.

Reach Dale Eisman at (703) 913-9872 or icemandc@msn.com.

David Madrid. 2006. **"Squadron of Predators to be Based in Arizona."** The Arizona Republic (Phoenix, AZ).

The Arizona National Guard will field the Air Force's newest Predator squadron at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson and Fort Huachuca near Sierra Vista.

The new drone squadron will require an additional 120 personnel, and that number could reach 350 by the time the unit is fully staffed and operational.

The squadron will be made up of pilots, sensor operators, and maintenance and support workers.

Predators are unmanned aerial systems, or drones, flown by remote control. The drones are long-endurance, medium-altitude aircraft used mainly for surveillance and to gather information. They also can carry weaponry and have been used in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon initially delayed the Predator squadron indefinitely until Gov. Janet Napolitano, Sen. John McCain and Rep. Jim Kolbe intervened and persuaded the Defense Department to base the squadron in Arizona.

The state's climate and its training environment were key factors in the decision to base the squadron in Arizona.

The new unit will begin operations in December.

Jeanine L'Ecuyer, a spokeswoman for the governor, said Tuesday that the new squadron is positive for Arizona.

"This is going to be kind of a neat deal," L'Ecuyer said.

L'Ecuyer said that the additional personnel that will come with the squadron will make up for some of the personnel losses because of the recent Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Fort Huachuca's losses were relatively minor.

Since the first Predator flight in 1995, the drones have flown more than 3,000 missions and more than 130,000 flight hours, half of which were flown during combat deployments to the Balkans, Southwest Asia and the Middle East.

Jim VandeHei. 2006. **"GOP Irritation At Bush Was Long Brewing."** The Washington Post (March 17): A1.

President Bush's troubles with congressional Republicans, which erupted during the backlash to the Dubai seaport deal, are rooted in policy frustrations and personal resentments that GOP lawmakers say stretch back to the opening days of the administration.

For years, the Bush White House and its allies on Capitol Hill seemed like one of the most unified teams Washington had ever seen, passing most of Bush's agenda with

little dissent. Privately, however, many lawmakers felt underappreciated, ignored and sometimes bullied by what they regarded as a White House intent on running government with little input from them. Often it was to pass items – an expanded federal role in education under the No Child Left Behind law and an expensive prescription drug benefit under Medicare – that left conservatives deeply uneasy.

What Bush is facing now, beyond just election-year jitters by legislators eyeing his depressed approval ratings, is a rebellion that has been brewing since the days when he looked invincible, say many lawmakers and strategists. Newly unleashed grievances could signal even bigger problems for Bush's last two years in office, as he would be forced to abandon a governing strategy that until recently counted on solid support from congressional Republicans.

The White House at times has been “non-responsive and arrogant,” said Sen. Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.). “There are a thousand small cuts,” he added, that are ignored when things are going well but “rear their heads when things are not going well.”

“Members felt they were willing to take a lot of tough votes and did not get much in return,” said Rep. Peter T. King (R-N.Y.), an early critic of the port deal.

Congressional scholar Norman J. Ornstein has written that the recently vented anger, after being suppressed for years out of loyalty or fear, might be seen in psychological terms. He called the condition “battered-Congress syndrome.”

The biggest test of dissatisfaction could come this summer if calls for withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq intensify. Most Republicans voted to authorize the Iraq war

after the White House assured them that Saddam Hussein posed a threat with weapons of mass destruction and that the United States had an effective military strategy. Many now harbor serious doubts about the war's prospects.

Bush still enjoys a high level of personal affection among GOP lawmakers, but there is a deep-seated frustration with his political, policy and congressional relations teams in particular that has poisoned the atmosphere. This is one reason many legislators are among a chorus of Washington voices urging Bush to infuse his White House with new blood.

Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) recently contacted White House officials and implored them to bring aboard a former lawmaker as a new chief diplomat to Congress. Lott floated several names, including former senators Daniel R. Coats (R-Ind.) and Slade Gorton (R-Wash.). It “would be a good idea” to have someone with real stature working Congress on Bush's behalf, Lott said. Former Senate majority leader Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.) told CBS on Wednesday that he did the same in a phone call to Bush Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card Jr., offering the name of former senator Fred D. Thompson (R-Tenn.).

Sen. Norm Coleman (R-Minn.), who won his seat in 2002 after a late push by Bush, told the Associated Press this week that the president should shake up the staff more broadly, accusing the White House of having a political “tin ear.” That was seen by some top White House aides as a wake-up call – because Coleman has been such a loyal Bush backer.

The White House may be listening. In private conversations with lawmakers in recent days, top officials have hinted that

Bush is open to bringing aboard new high-level staffers, including perhaps a former lawmaker or two. With the recent departure of domestic policy chief Claude A. Allen, now facing criminal theft charges, Bush has positions to fill and every incentive to use those openings to rebuild relations with Capitol Hill.

A senior White House official, who requested anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said Bush is moving to hold more face-to-face meetings with legislators but has no immediate plans to fire any staff. Even before the seaport flap, Bush was holding more meetings than ever with individual House and Senate members, including Democrats, to discuss Iraq and the domestic agenda, aides said. Bush, Vice President Cheney and other officials are also raising millions of dollars for lawmakers seeking reelection and other congressional candidates.

One reason some lawmakers said Bush should shift gears quickly is the changed power structure in the House. For the first five years of the administration, Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) and then-House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-Tex.) used a top-down management style to push the Bush agenda through. With Bush at the top of the ticket and very popular with the GOP base, most lawmakers fell in line.

The election of Rep. John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) to replace DeLay as party leader has created a more unpredictable and freewheeling Republican caucus. Boehner won by promising to return power to chairmen and rank-and-file legislators who tend to be less compromising – and less concerned about accommodating the White House.

The blowup over the Dubai deal illustrated the new environment. Bush infuriated members by threatening to veto any congressional effort to prevent an Arab company from taking control of terminals at six U.S. seaports. Instead of falling in line, they foiled the deal by joining with Democrats for a 62 to 2 committee vote against Bush. It was the breaking point for many members. Afterward, Rep. Thomas M. Davis III (R-Va.) was quoted in *The Washington Post* as saying, “This is probably the worst administration ever in getting Congress’s opinion on anything.”

Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) is a prime example of such perceived slights. He was handpicked by the White House to challenge then-Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.) in 2004. Thune entered the race under heavy White House pressure and won in part by promising to protect South Dakota’s Ellsworth Air Force Base from being closed.

But when the Pentagon targeted Ellsworth for closing, Thune’s complaints to White House senior officials were coldly dismissed, according to people familiar with the conversations. “Why are you whining?” was how one person familiar with the session paraphrased the White House response.

Thune declined to comment on the base closing but said, “I think Republicans want to be helpful, but the administration needs to help us to help them.”

The tipping point for many lawmakers was last year’s debate over the Bush plan to restructure Social Security by offering personal savings accounts. For years, House Republicans had sent word to Karl Rove, Bush’s top strategist, and others that any efforts to dismantle the Social Security

system could prove disastrous to them. Regardless of the merits, the legislators would say, older Americans vote in high percentages in congressional races and would likely punish the party if it tinkered with the popular program.

House Republicans in particular were already panicking about the Medicare prescription drug benefit they had passed more than a year earlier. The program was seen as too costly for conservatives and too confusing for seniors. Yet a majority of Republicans voted for it under intense lobbying from Bush and GOP congressional leaders, and several regretted it.

“Bottom line, there is a lot of buyer’s remorse,” said Rep. Tom Feeney (R-Fla.). If the vote were held today on the Medicare prescription drug benefit, he said, as many 120 Republicans would vote against it. “It was probably our greatest failure in my adult lifetime,” he said.

So when Bush sprang the Social Security plan on them, many Republicans balked. Eventually, congressional Republicans revolted and killed what Bush had trumpeted as the top domestic priority of his second term. Another common complaint about the White House is that it asked lawmakers to take politically risky votes and did not bother to provide cover when Democrats started attacking.

Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), a Bush ally who dismissed concerns about an inattentive White House, said he regrets voting for the No Child Left Behind bill in the first term.

The Associated Press, 2006, “Air Force Cancels Galena Runway Contract.”

Associated Press Newswires (March 16, 2016)

Fairbanks, Alaska (AP) – State officials say they were surprised by the decision by the Air Force to stop helping plow snow from the runway at Galena after March 31.

The military Base Realignment and Closure Commission voted in August to close the Galena Forward Operating Location. But the commission also requested that the Air Force move slowly given the expected severe impact on the community’s employment and utilities.

Under the law approved by Congress last fall, the commission’s closure orders must be completed within six years.

“We were expecting the transition from the Air Force to be a lot longer,” said Shannon McCarthy, spokeswoman for the state Department of Transportation & Public Facilities in Fairbanks.

The Air Force has told the state that the current snowplowing contract will end March 31 and won’t be renewed next year, McCarthy said.

The state will continue to maintain the runway for light aircraft, McCarthy said.

The Air Force has no personnel at Galena, a village on the Yukon River 270 miles west of Fairbanks.

Anchorage-based Chugach Support Services has a contract with the Air Force to maintain several buildings, including a heating plant and a wastewater plant, in Galena. The company employs more than 40 people.

Barney Uhart, president of Chugach Support Services, said Tuesday that the company's contract with the Air Force is still intact.

Bart Jansen, 2006. **"Congressional Primary Mostly Uncontested."** Portland (ME) Press Herald (March 16): A12.

The Only Race to Have More Than One Candidate This June is For a Democratic Challenger to Sen. Snowe

The three Maine congressional incumbents up for re-election this year will skate through the June 13 primary, according to records, wrapping up their parties' nomination without opposition. But information available as the filing deadline for candidates passed Wednesday showed that Republican Sen. Olympia Snowe and Democratic Reps. Tom Allen and Mike Michaud all will be opposed in the Nov. 7 general election.

The Republican opponents of Allen and Michaud -- Darlene Curley of Scarborough and Scott D'Amboise of Lisbon Falls -- also are unopposed and will get a free pass to November.

Snowe, 59, of Falmouth, is seeking her third six-year term in the Senate after serving 16 years in the U.S. House. She said protecting Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery and an accounting office in Limestone from closure were among her biggest recent accomplishments.

Snowe's goals for another term include improving access to health care, both through the Medicare drug benefit and helping the uninsured, and preventing the alternative-minimum tax from increasingly hitting the middle class.

"I think health care and job creation are key goals," Snowe said. "People are looking for simplicity in the tax code and I think we have to accomplish that."

She will face the winner of a Democratic primary between Jean Hay Bright, 58, of Dixmont, and Eric Mehnert, 44, of Orono. Both candidates criticize the war in Iraq and Snowe's support for Justice Samuel Alito's nomination to the Supreme Court.

Hay Bright, a writer and organic farmer, describes herself as a progressive candidate with priorities to create a national single-payer health-care system and a better minimum wage.

She argued that she has a good chance to defeat Snowe as her first female challenger in 28 years.

"It's time for a change," she said.

Mehnert, a civil-rights lawyer, contends tax cuts for the rich have caused the poor to become poorer and left the middle class squeezed. He complained that the federal government went from a record budget surplus to record deficit in six years.

The House race for southern Maine could become a three-way contest.

Allen, 60, of Portland, is seeking his sixth term in the U.S. House. His seat on the Energy and Commerce Committee offers him the forum to debate improvements in health care and protections for the environment.

Curley, his challenger, is a two-term state representative who criticizes Allen as overly partisan. A registered nurse and small-business owner, she seeks to balance the

federal budget, strengthen national security and move the country toward energy independence.

A third potential candidate in the race is Dexter Kamilewicz, 61, of Orr's Island. The peace activist is running without party affiliation, which allows him until May 25 to file as an official candidate. He said he has collected 1,800 of the 2,000 signatures required to file.

"I believe the war in Iraq is not only illegal, immoral and cruel, it is raising havoc at home," he said. "I know because I have a son in Iraq who I believe cannot be supported by continuing the slaughter."

Michaud, 51, of East Millinocket, is seeking his third term in the U.S. House after 30 years as a mill worker and 22 years as a state lawmaker. From his seat on the Transportation Committee, he helped secure construction projects in the last highway bill.

He sits on the Small Business Committee and wants to bring more jobs to Maine. As a member of the Veterans Affairs Committee, he works to improve benefits.

His opponent in the general election is Republican Scott D'Amboise, a former Lisbon Falls selectman. The 15-year eye technician and former teacher's assistant in Brewer is campaigning to bring jobs back to Maine. He also argues that immigration laws need to be strengthened and enforced better.

The congressional incumbents enjoyed a comfortable advantage in fundraising at the end of last year, according to reports filed with the Federal Election Commission.

Snowe had \$1.8 million on hand. Among the Democrats, Hay Bright had \$823 on hand, but owes \$4,500 to herself. Mehnert had \$3,508 on hand.

In the House races, Allen had \$258,095 on hand. Neither Curley nor Kamilewicz reported fundraising last year.

Michaud had \$208,058 on hand. D'Amboise didn't raise money last year.

Bart Jansen can be contacted at (202) 488-1119 or at:

bjansen@pressherald.com

The Associated Press, 2006. "**Virtual Danger Zone Coming to Ohio Military Base.**" Associated Press Newswires (March 16, 17:48).

Dayton, Ohio (AP) – A virtual world where rear-world military pilots train for real-world missions by taking part in digital dogfights has been created in the Arizona desert. That's all about to change.

In a few years, the Warfighter Readiness Training Division will pull up stakes and move to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, bringing about 80 government jobs along with a cost of high-tech flight simulators and high-res projection screens.

The move, which will be made by 2011, is part of the Base Realignment and Closure Process.

The division currently occupies a six-acre compound at Williams Gateway Airport in Mesa. Inside is a cavernous chamber that looks like a cross between a war room and sports bar.

Dominating the dimly lit bay are a bank of jumbo video screens that face a long desk with computer work stations. Behind the desk are two long rows of black, vinyl couches. On each side of the bay are four booth-like flight simulators – F-16 cockpits enveloped in video screens.

Pilots can sit in the simulators and take part in complex exercises that involve real airplanes, other airmen in simulators and computer-generated players, while mission directors monitor the action on giant screens.

“It can bend your mind a little bit, but we’re a research lab. We’re supposed to do things like that,” said Col. Daniel Walker, commander of the research site.

While the individual players may be on different bases, they can see each other in the simulators, said Maj. Joel Boswell, director of operations.

While the high bay is sometimes used in training exercises, its main purpose is research. The division’s mission is to create the tools and techniques the Air Force will use to train tomorrow’s airmen.

Walker envisions a time when the same virtual-reality systems used for training might also be used to carry out actual combat missions, much as airmen now fly armed Predator drones from afar.

“That’s the hybrid environment that is years off,” he said.

The unit will be folded into the Air Force Research Lab at Wright-Patterson, taking up about 130,000 square feet. Along with the 80 government jobs, there are also 120 contractor jobs supporting the work.

Dale Eisman. 2006. “**As Plan to Keep Oceana Nears Deadline, Admiral Is ‘Encouraged’**.” The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 15).

Continued commercial and residential growth around Oceana Naval Air Station “in any way, shape or form” ultimately would force the Navy to relocate its East Coast fighter jets, the service’s top admiral warned Tuesday.

But with Virginia Beach and state officials facing a March 31 deadline to give the Pentagon a plan to roll back existing development near the base, Adm. Mike Mullen said he remains “encouraged” by state and local efforts to preserve Oceana.

Mullen, the chief of naval operations, told reporters he is “supportive of Oceana as the place for us in the future, given that there isn’t any more encroachment.”

The sprawling base near the Oceanfront is the Navy’s largest East Coast airport and Virginia Beach’s largest employer.

Once surrounded by farmland, it now is crowded by shopping centers and subdivisions that have forced arriving and departing jets to alter their flight paths, creating hazards * some pilots argue * to civilians on the ground and limiting the base’s usefulness for flight training.

While underscoring his preference to stay at Oceana, Mullen stopped well short of predicting that the local growth-limiting initiatives will satisfy Thomas Gimble, the Defense Department’s inspector general.

Under federal law, Gimble must decide by June whether the state and city have met requirements set last year by the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

The commission ordered state and local leaders to commit at least \$15 million per year to acquiring homes and businesses in the highest-risk "accident potential zone" near the base.

Failure to comply could lead to relocation of Oceana's 200-plus F/A-18 Hornet and Super Hornet fighters to Cecil Field, a former Navy base near Jacksonville, Fla., the commission said.

City leaders in Virginia Beach say they think their plan will meet the commission's dictates, but they have refused to comply with an apparent requirement that their program include condemnation proceedings to acquire property from homeowners and businesses otherwise unwilling to sell.

The city is expected to complete action by March 28 on an incentive package aimed at encouraging commercial landowners in the accident zone to sell or convert their property to warehouses and other low-density uses the Navy says would not interfere with the base.

Gimble and members of his staff have met privately at least twice with city and state officials, including Gov. Timothy M. Kaine, to discuss the city and state initiatives.

Gimble has been mum about his view of those efforts and through a spokesman indicated early this month that he does not intend to hold public hearings on the plan.

Gimble's findings are due June 1.

Even if Gimble finds the city has not met the BRAC Commission's requirements, the Navy is likely to remain at Oceana for years. The city of Jacksonville, which owns the Cecil Field property and initially offered to return it to the Navy to redevelop the base, has since backed away from that plan.

The BRAC process gives the city until the end of December to reconsider its position and submit a new proposal for reviving the base, however.

If it does, Gimble would have until June 2007 to review its plan.

Reach Dale Eisman at (703) 913-9872 or icemande@msn.com.

Emma Rife. 2006. **"Land Bought at Former Air Base."** Sun-News (Myrtle Beach, SC) (March 15): 1.

A New York developer has acquired 300 acres of open land on the former Myrtle Beach Air Force Base and will unveil his plans next week during a press conference attended by Gov. Mark Sanford.

The development will compose a large portion of the residential-commercial mix planned for the former base, which closed in 1993. Other developers have stepped up to build on the 3,800 acres of the former base, including McCafferty Interests' plans for an urban village on 113 acres there and Lennar Corp.'s plans for 503 acres of the Ross Tract.

In all, the base will hold a projected 5,000 homes and 15,000 people.

Myrtle Beach Property Development LLC bought 290 acres from the Ross family for

\$39.5 million, according to an Aug. 15 Chicora news release.

Myrtle Beach Property Development submitted a development plan to the city at the end of February. Developer Robert W. O'Neel III of New York plans to build single- and multifamily homes and a commercial district along U.S. 17 Bypass and parts of Farrow Parkway, according to city officials. The New Town planned-unit development would incorporate 1,017 residential units, which the plan says would be "influenced by Low-country towns."

Details of the project's timetable were not immediately available, but the plan will go to the city's Planning Commission this month. Planning Director Jack Walker said.

Greg Hobbs, a developer on the project, referred all questions to a public relations firm, which declined to answer questions until the news conference.

Sanford will be joined at the news conference March 23 by Myrtle Beach Mayor John Rhodes, Myrtle Beach City Council members and Horry County Council members.

Under the plan, which needs City Council approval, the commercial district would include retail, hotels, offices and multifamily housing.

Residences also would be built over retail stores, according to the plan.

Commercial buildings would not exceed 150 feet; residential, 50 feet.

O'Neel is head of RWC Acquisitions LLC, a master developer of premier resort development communities in select U.S.

markets, according to a release announcing the news conference.

Contact EMMA RITCH at 444-1722 or eritch@thesunnews.com.

Phillip Megowan. 2006. **"County Warned on Growth at Fort Meade."** The Baltimore (MD) Sun (March 15): 1G.

Planning Chief Says Anne Arundel Should Act Now to Seek Federal Funds to Prepare for Influx of Jobs

Anne Arundel County should start moving now to secure federal funds to prepare for a large military expansion at Fort Meade, a top county official told the County Council yesterday.

To that end, Planning Director Joseph W. Rutter Jr. said, it is paramount that the council approve the establishment of a committee that could petition for money to handle the transition.

Rutter said such a committee could make an initial funding request next month to the Office of Economic Adjustment, a Department of Defense agency that provides assistance to communities affected by the base realignment and closure process, also called BRAC.

Rutter cautioned that competing funding interests from other states affected by BRAC, along with spending demands for the Iraq war and the reconstruction from Hurricane Katrina, are squeezing federal resources.

"We are making sure we understand where we are going ... and to search for funding," Rutter testified in a council work session.

About 5,300 defense jobs are expected to arrive to Fort Meade over the next six years, a movement that could spur the arrival of thousands of private-sector contractors in the defense information and technology sectors.

Such an influx, local and state leaders estimate, will require upgrading roads, waterlines and schools and expanding police and fire service * to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars in Anne Arundel County.

Local officials have said state and federal dollars will be needed over the next decade to pay for the improvements.

The committee must be established, according to Pentagon rules, through Anne Arundel County. The panel of 12 to 15 members will seek to represent the interests of Anne Arundel, along with several surrounding jurisdictions, including Howard, Prince George's and Montgomery counties. The rules require that the County Council approve the formation of the committee.

Rutter said that County Executive Janet S. Owens, Howard County Executive James N. Robey and Anne Arundel County Councilman Bill D. Burlison, an Odenton Democrat who represents the areas around Fort Meade, would serve as ex-officio members of the committee.

Robey will soon establish by executive order a separate growth committee for Howard County, but only Anne Arundel's committee will be able to petition for federal assistance, Rutter said.

The Anne Arundel committee will include "the [other] people who have been involved all along," Rutter said, including Col.

Kenneth O. McCreedy, the Fort Meade commander, and Richard W. Story, chief executive of Howard County's economic development arm, along with representatives from the National Security Agency, the county Board of Education, business interests and local community leaders.

Rutter said that Anne Arundel officials will continue to work most closely with their counterparts in Howard County, which is about a mile from the Army post. Howard is expected to assume much of the residential and commercial growth coming to the Fort Meade area.

Council members inquired about other specific appointments, but Rutter declined to elaborate. He said that some potential appointees had yet to be contacted by the county, but that he would provide a list to the council in advance of the council session on Monday, when a vote may occur. The resolution is expected to pass.

Councilwoman Pamela G. Beidle, a Linticum Democrat, implored Rutter to make sure the committee consists of community leaders "who really know about those areas."

Another council member, Barbara D. Samotajczyk, a Democrat who represents the Annapolis area, said of the resolution: "We are being asked to appoint something in a total vacuum."

But Burlison, who represents areas surrounding Fort Meade, said the forming of the committee is a vital step toward addressing the concerns of his constituents regarding transportation and schools.

"Can anyone question the importance of that?" he asked.

phill.mcgowan@halsun.com

Christopher J. Dorobek. 2006. **"DISA Pins Workforce Hopes on Telework."** Federal Computer Week (March 14).

Orlando, Fla. * The Defense Information Systems Agency is looking at making telework available as a way of keeping its workforce, the head of the agency said.

Air Force Lt. Gen. Charlie Croom, DISA's director, said the issue is particularly important for the organization right now because many of DISA's jobs have been moved from Northern Virginia, where the agency has been located for years, across the Potomac River to Maryland as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) decision.

That decision affects the 4,400 people at DISA's headquarters.

"They don't want to leave," Croom said in a speech at the IPIC 2006 conference here. Speaking to a mostly industry group, he said, "I am bleeding to death because people like you are stealing my folks."

As a way of keeping people, Croom said DISA is looking at letting people work from home. "My belief is that they can do this work at their house," he said.

The agency is going through the process of determining which jobs can be done from home, but Croom said that telework should be available to most employees. "I'm trying to think of what jobs couldn't be done at home," he said.

The process is still in the early stages. But, Croom said "we want to be a leader in this area."

Under the BRAC decision, DISA has six years to complete the move.

cdorobek@few.com

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Perry Swanson. 2006. **"A Force for Change."** The Gazette (Colorado Springs, CO) (March 12): A1.

Military Town Will Be More So

Colorado Springs has been called a tourist town and Silicon Mountain. Some say it's the Vatican City of evangelical Christianity.

For decades, however, there's another label it has worn with pride: military town.

But that description depends on where you live, where you work and where you shop.

The stores and restaurants on the fringes of Fort Carson are crowded with fatigues. But go downtown, and you're more likely to bump into a lawyer or engineer than a soldier.

Stop at a red light on Powers Boulevard, and the driver next to you could well be wearing an Air Force jumpsuit. But even he might question whether he's really living in a military town.

There's no doubt about one thing. You'll soon see more crew cuts on the streets and more planes and helicopters in the sky.

Thanks to base closures and re-source shifts elsewhere, an estimated 12,256 active-duty military personnel are expected to move to

the Pikes Peak region by 2008. About 3,760 new soldiers are already here * the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, which had been based in South Korea for 50 years.

Another 8,496 active-duty troops are coming, mainly from assignments in Fort Hood, Texas.

They'll join a community already steeped in military culture and highly dependent on the economic juice that flows from military jobs and Department of Defense contracts. El Paso County is home to five military installations: Fort Carson, the Air Force Academy, Peterson Air Force Base, Schriever Air Force Base and Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station. Military spending in the county totaled more than \$3.3 billion in 2004.

The new troops will increase the local active-duty military presence by 45.3 percent.

They'll bring along more than green fatigues and a vocabulary full of acronyms. Add spouses and children, plus a few hundred civilians who will work on military bases, and the Pikes Peak region could receive 35,100 additional residents.

If current growth trends continue in the general population, new active-duty military personnel would account for 50.6 percent of El Paso County's adult population increase from 2004 to 2008.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

The arriving troops * most of them soldiers * will reinforce perceptions for many people who consider Colorado Springs a military town. Tammy Price, a resident of the Briargate area who's lived in Colorado

Spring for 10 years, said she's used to seeing people in uniform and other signs of military influence. She sees the military as a bigger influence than other cultural forces such as tourism.

"I came here through the military * my mother was in the military, my brother is in the military," she said. "When people come visit, what do they want to do? They want to go to the Air Force Academy."

Price's boyfriend, Tyler Kunnary, has always associated Colorado Springs with the military because his uncle was stationed here as a colonel in the Air Force. Kunnary works for American Medical Response, an ambulance service. He said the agency regularly treats people covered by Tricare, the military health service.

What makes a military town is a matter of perspective, though, said Adan Arevalo, a member of the 2nd Infantry Division stationed at Fort Carson. Arevalo said the military doesn't seem especially influential here compared with one of his previous stations, Fort Bragg, N.C.

That base is in Cumberland County, where active-duty military personnel and veterans make up 47.1 percent of adults, nearly double the proportion in El Paso County.

Even small signs of the military's influence, such as consumer discounts, are less common here, Arevalo said.

"Here, there's nothing," he said. "You go to a restaurant, you think you're going to get 10 percent (discount). No."

The soldiers arriving in the next couple of years probably won't make much difference to those already here, Arevalo said.

"Our unit's going to be deployed a lot. We'll be here one year and gone the next," he said.

YOUNGER, MORE DIVERSE

No one can offer a detailed description of the soldiers who will be redeployed here, but if they look like the military personnel here now, they'll stand out from the rest of the adult population in several ways:

They'll be younger. Nearly half of Fort Carson's soldiers are age 18-24 while that age group makes up about 10 percent of the general population.

They'll be more racially diverse. Racial minorities make up 27.6 percent of Fort Carson soldiers but 19.1 percent of the general population. The biggest difference is among blacks * they're 15.9 percent of Fort Carson soldiers and 6.8 percent of El Paso County as a whole.

The soldiers will be overwhelmingly male. About 91 percent of current Fort Carson soldiers are male compared with 49 percent of El Paso County. The spouses of married soldiers will balance the gender mix somewhat, but 49 percent of Army personnel nationally and 44 percent of Fort Carson soldiers are single.

No matter the demographic breakdown, the arrival of more military personnel is good news for people like Tom Yi, who runs the Seoul Alterations and dry cleaning shop in the Widefield area. The store caters to soldiers and advertises discounts on service for "BDUs," or battle dress uniforms.

"The military has a lot to do with our success," Yi said. "When they're gone, we see a big decrease in the amount of clothes that come in."

During just the past few months, as soldiers returned to Fort Carson from Iraq, business has increased 15 percent, Yi said.

Yi runs another store in the Briargate area, where he said most military customers come from Peterson Air Force Base. Peterson is expected to receive 482 additional active-duty personnel during the next couple of years. The Briargate store isn't as dependent on military customers as the Widefield store, Yi said, but it's still a big factor.

"This city is a military city; the whole city is dependent on the military," he said.

RADICAL CHANGE UNLIKELY

The rapid growth of El Paso County's military population is a big deal to economists, home builders and politicians. Still, it does not mean the area is on the cusp of revolutionary change * at least not the entire county.

Active-duty military personnel made up 7 percent of the county's adult population of 386,072 in 2004. Assuming 12,256 troops move here and the general population continues to grow at the same rate, that would increase to 9.9 percent of adults in 2008.

People in parts of the county might not notice the military's growth at all, but other areas will feel it big-time. Most of the new soldiers will move to neighborhoods on the east and south sides of Colorado Springs and to Fountain, said Fred Crowley, who studied the issue for the Southern Colorado Economic Forum.

Adding more soldiers will boost local businesses, everything from dry cleaners to car dealers to restaurants, but it will also

present challenges for school districts trying to accommodate a surge in students.

The areas where Crowley predicts new soldiers will settle already have a slightly higher concentration of people with ties to the military than other parts of the county.

In Fountain, 33.4 percent of the adult population was either active-duty or military veterans in 2009, according to the latest data available from the U.S. Census Bureau. In the Black Forest area, veterans and active-duty soldiers made up 21.6 percent of the adult population.

Some soldiers who recently transferred here don't need demographic data to know they're in a town heavily influenced by the military. Roommates Chris Hartings and Matt Paladino, both 24 years old, were recently stationed at Fort Carson after one-year tours in Iraq.

They live near Fountain and Academy boulevards, on the western edge of the area where many new soldiers are expected to move.

Hartings and Paladino said they identify other military personnel by stickers they see on cars in their neighborhood. But one attraction of the Pikes Peak region is its cultural offerings aside from the military, Paladino said.

"I like that there's things to do other than work," he said recently while he and Hartings shopped for motorcycles near Hancock Expressway and Delta Drive. "It's nice to meet new people, fresh perspectives. From what I've seen, Colorado Springs has been great to military people."

CONTACT THE WRITER: 636-0187 or perry.swanson@gazette.com

Robert Gehrke, 2006. **"Ex-Rep. Hansen an Interior Contender?"** The Salt Lake (UT) Tribune (March 15): A1.

Jim Hansen made a career in Congress driving environmentalists bonkers. Maybe he hasn't had his fill yet.

Hansen, who represented Utah for 22 years in the U.S. House, is among a handful of people who have been mentioned as a possible replacement for departing Interior Secretary Gale Norton.

"If I was asked to be secretary, of course you'd take it," Hansen said in an interview, but he doesn't anticipate a call from the White House anytime soon.

"On the one hand, it would be extremely interesting. On the other hand, it would be a lot of work," said the 73-year-old Hansen. "You've got a ton of problems there. But I think someone's got to take the bull by the horns on a lot of those things and come up with a good, moderate, reasonable position."

Certainly, Hansen is not a front-runner. That distinction most likely belongs to Idaho Gov. Dirk Kempthorne.

While the White House has declined to fuel speculation with names of possible Norton successors, Bush Chief of Staff Andrew Card told The Denver Post that the next secretary would probably be a Westerner.

Even if it is remote, the prospect of Hansen at the helm of the agency that oversees more than 500 million acres of federal land could cause some sleepless nights for the green crowd.

"Clearly we don't see eye to eye with the congressman on a variety of issues related to

public-lands management,” said Lawson LeGate, southwest regional director for the Sierra Club.

But Rep. Rob Bishop, R-Utah, who took Hansen’s place in Congress, said his predecessor would be “a perfect fit.”

“No one could be nominated who knows the issues better,” Bishop said. “As a businessman and longtime congressman, he has the skills to manage a department and work the Hill. And he has an appreciation for the land.”

Hansen has been mentioned in several articles speculating about possible Interior Department successors to Norton.

Former Rep. Scott McInnis, R-Colo., told *The Denver Post* that Hansen would be a logical pick but could spark a tough confirmation fight.

Hansen said McInnis, who also has been rumored as a possible candidate, only said that because he doesn’t want to do it.

“My crystal ball needs a lot of cleaning,” LeGate said. “[But] I’d be surprised if [Hansen] was at the top of the list.”

Kempthorne is the name most commonly mentioned by those following the issue.

Others in the mix include Colorado Gov. Bill Owens and former Colorado Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, who was endorsed in a letter to the president Tuesday by Colorado Sen. Wayne Asatiani.

Hansen spent two decades on the House Resources Committee, which handles Interior Department issues, retiring as chairman of the committee. In that time, he fought bitterly against designating millions

of acres of wilderness in Utah and decried the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument designation in the state.

He still mocks an environmental group’s proposal to drain Lake Powell as a pinnacle of stupidity.

As Bishop points out, Hansen was also the last Utah congressman to get wilderness created in the state before Bishop got a new area designated last year to block nuclear-waste storage in the state * an idea hatched by Hansen.

A former House Ethics Committee chairman, Hansen would potentially be an asset for a department under a shadow because of dealings with disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

Hansen is in the last month of his tenure on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which recommended closing or scaling back scores of military bases and is now drafting a plan to simplify the next round of closures, should one be ordered by Congress.

He has a consulting and lobbying business with his son but said he would have to “cut the ties” in the unlikely event the Interior post is offered.

Scott Greene, executive director of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, which sparred for years with Hansen over public-land protection, said no matter whom the Bush administration picks “it will make all the difference of rotating bald tires.”

He said the new secretary will continue the administration’s policy of rolling back conservation policies.

"This administration has divided the West with its push for energy development over all other uses, and you'd hope they could make a selection to heal that rift," Groene said. "Many of the names tossed around, such as Jim's, would do nothing to heal that rift."

gehrke@sltrib.com

Roseanne Gerin, 2006. **"Seven to Compete under Huge Command, Control Contract."** Newsbytes News Network (March 15)

Seven companies won contracts to compete for task orders under a 10-year, \$19.3 billion program to provide engineering, logistics and acquisition service support for Army command, control, communication, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems.

Earlier this month, the Army's Communications-Electronics Life Cycle Management Command at Fort Monmouth, N.J., selected Booz Allen Hamilton Inc., CACI International Inc., Computer Sciences Corp. and Lockheed Martin Corp. as the four large company winners.

Sensor Technologies Inc. of Red Bank, N.J., USFalcon Inc. of Lowell, Mass., and ViaTech Inc. of Eatontown, N.J., were the three small company awardees. The contract has a five-year base period and a five-year option period.

The Strategic Services Sourcing program will provide cradle-to-grave support to C4ISR systems. It consolidates five existing contracts to let the Army quickly buy engineering, logistical and business operations services.

Under the contract, task orders are anticipated for thermal imaging, imaging intensification, advanced optics for night vision devices, counter mine site technology, signals intelligence, and electronic warfare measures, to name a few, said J. Keith Kellogg, executive vice president of CACI's mission systems business group.

"Every bit of the work we are talking about supports the warfighter in the field," Kellogg said. "It saves lives and allows us to win on the battlefield. This is an absolutely critical part of the military's winning on the battlefield because C4ISR is the silver bullet in weaponry. If you get the C4ISR part of it right, then we're going to win the fights into the future."

Fort Monmouth*home to many of the Army's technical program offices*is one of several bases slated to be shut down under the Base Realignment and Closure program. The Communications-Electronics Life Cycle Management Command, along with other Army IT offices at Fort Monmouth, is to be relocated to the Aberdeen Proving Ground or Fort Meade, both in Maryland.

Fort Monmouth's closure will not affect the contract work, Kellogg said, adding that CACI will move along with the command to do the work.

"It won't affect the contract because every one of these things that [the Army] is trying to solve is a warfighter issue," he said. "These things will not go away in a night. They are all critical needs for the U.S. military, and they are part of the Communications-Electronics Life Cycle Management Command's master task list."

Reported By Washington Technology,
<http://www.washingtontechnology.com>

Louis Jacobson, 2006. **"BRAC Attack Unlikely For Members, Even in Districts With Losses."** Roll Call (March 15).

Early in 2005, as the Base Realignment and Closure Commission was deciding which military facilities should be shuttered, politicians and their advisers watched nervously. Fearing that a major installation back home could be closed and hundreds of constituents forced out of work, elected officials across the country did everything they could to shape the panel's recommendations.

In retrospect, they needn't have worried so much. Since Congress officially signed off on the BRAC decisions last October, loads of military jobs have been put on the chopping block * but few if any politicians are seeing their own job security threatened as a result.

An Out There review of BRAC decisions and the 2006 campaign landscape suggests that, at most, one vulnerable incumbent * Rep. John Hostettler (R-Ind.) * could face negative fallout from a base-closing issue. And in Hostettler's case, he already has enough obstacles to re-election, from a shortage of campaign funds to discontent over his staunch

social conservatism, that the downsizing of the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center is not expected to become decisive this fall.

"It's hard for me to come up with any Congressional race that will be seriously impacted by base closing," said Jamie Gallagher, a Republican lobbyist who

specializes in base-closing and military issues. "It's one of those things where the pre-negotiations beforehand were completed."

All told, Gallagher said, the Republican Party dodged a bullet in last year's BRAC process, since the party controlled the White House, both chambers of Congress and the Pentagon, meaning it could have been targeted by voters angry over closures.

But if anything, Gallagher said, the BRAC process produced some winners among elected officials * many of them Republicans.

Perhaps the biggest winner was Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.), who ousted then-Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D) in 2004, in large part due to his argument that he would be able to exercise more clout for South Dakota with the White House and the Republican Congressional majority.

In the initial BRAC recommendations, Ellsworth Air Force Base was slated for closure. But Thune spearheaded the counterattack, and in the end, Ellsworth was spared. Thanks to this turnaround, Thune is "now bullet-proof in South Dakota," said Pierre-based lobbyist Bob Miller.

Other South Dakota politicians * notably Sen. Tim Johnson (D) and Rep. Stephanie Herseth (D) * are also likely to win points from voters for helping keep the base open, though probably not as many as Thune, who was most closely identified with the issue.

Of the South Dakota politicians, only Herseth faces the possibility of a competitive race this fall, and she appears to be making use of the BRAC issue to bolster her standing.

"Herseith has already put out a framed piece with a large color photo of a B1b bomber on it," said Todd Epp, a Sioux Falls activist who has worked for Democrats in recent elections. "She has also been crowing about her bipartisanship in working with [Gov. Mike] Rounds (R), Johnson and Thune. The three [Members of Congress] even had a joint booth together at the State Fair in Huron this summer * a first. So, Ellsworth's salvation will likely be a major component of her campaign."

Another winner appears to be Rep. Rob Simmons (R-Conn.). Though Simmons' district did suffer a net loss of jobs, his successful efforts to save the Naval Submarine Base New London from a feared total closure is expected to give him a major boost in his nip-and-tuck race against former Democratic state legislator Joe Courtney.

"He's in a district where the registration is more Democratic than Republican, and if that base had been lost, then he would have been in trouble," said Paul Hirsch, a base-closure lobbyist in Washington, D.C.

But Connecticut Democratic consultant Roy Occhiogrosso was somewhat less sanguine on how much help the BRAC decision will offer Simmons. "The sub base being taken off the list just means that he's got one less headache," Occhiogrosso said.

Another potential winner from BRAC is freshman Rep. Joe Schwarz (R-Mich.), who "might be able to get some points in his native Battle Creek for his steadfast efforts to stave off the closing of Fort Custer," said Bill Ballenger, who publishes the newsletter Inside Michigan Politics. In Schwarz's case, his toughest challenge this year will be winning a GOP primary in which he's being challenged from the right.

In New Hampshire, Rep. Jeb Bradley (R) * and to a lesser extent, neighboring Rep. Charles Bass (R) * should benefit from the decision not to close the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Both New Hampshire Members sit in somewhat marginal districts, though so far neither one faces a top-tier challenge for 2006.

And in some states, the jobs that were lost in BRAC were partly offset by gains (or at least by losses avoided) elsewhere in the state. In Maine, for instance, 3,275 jobs at Naval Air Station Brunswick were lost, but Portsmouth, many of whose employees live in Maine, was saved.

Base-closing specialists point to several factors that helped create such a modest electoral impact this time around.

One is that the BRAC process was widely deemed to be fair and transparent. Most voters appear to have viewed Members in affected districts as working hard to protect jobs for their constituents. "Every politician worked in a bipartisan fashion to make sure that their base didn't close," said one GOP strategist.

Moreover, in contrast to the previous three rounds of BRAC * in 1991, 1993 and 1995 * the 2005 process tended to result in partial realignments rather than massive closures. This eased the impact for at-risk politicians.

Of course, as the BRAC process soldiered on, a bevy of new issues emerged that helped push base closing down the list of national concerns. But the most important factor in minimizing collateral damage was partial victory: last year's BRAC was the first to be held since the pro-incumbent realignment after the 2000 Census. That meant that many Members who might

otherwise have been at risk from losses are now set to coast to re-election.

Except for Hostettler and Simmons, the 10 Members with the largest 2005 BRAC job losses, according to calculations by The Hotline, all hold seats that are generally safe.

Now, of course, all worried Members know what they have to do on base closing: Lobby hard to avoid another BRAC round, at least for another decade.

Jon W. Glass, 2006. **"Beach City Council Takes Two Steps in Effort to Keep Jets at Base."** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 15).

The City Council took two steps Tuesday to bolster Oceana Naval Air Station and the military's presence in the region.

First, the council voted to participate in a regional alliance to protect and expand the region's military facilities and defense-related spending.

The 13 cities and counties participating in the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance have agreed to contribute 40 cents per resident toward the effort.

On Tuesday, the City Council agreed to spend \$43,400 on the alliance for the rest of the fiscal year that ends June 30. The council plans to contribute \$173,600 for the 2007 fiscal year, starting July 1.

The alliance has hired a Washington lobbying firm to build relationships with the Pentagon, Congress and other defense-related interests.

Second, the City Council forwarded several measures to the Planning Commission intended to reduce and eventually eliminate businesses that the Navy considers incompatible in high-risk areas around Oceana.

The proposals are part of the city's plan to comply with the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which ordered Virginia Beach to halt and roll back development around Oceana or risk losing the base's jets.

The city would offer incentives to property owners to move or convert incompatible businesses or to open new compatible businesses in Accident Potential Zone 1.

Business owners in the Clear Zone * the highest-risk area for a jet crash * would get incentives to move.

The incentives include speedier approval of businesses that the Navy considers compatible, such as mini-warehouses, recates of certain business taxes and fees, and tax breaks.

City officials said the plan contains safeguards for home owners in APZ-1 to prevent commercial intrusion into residential neighborhoods.

"I want to make sure the neighborhoods are protected and that this in no way ends up Svis-scheeing or degrading a neighborhood," Councilman Richard Maddox, whose Beach District includes the area, said before Tuesday's meeting.

The initiative attempts to address the BRAC ultimatum without condemning and buying existing homes and businesses in APZ-1.

Philip Shucet, chairman of the Citizens BRAC Committee, praised the voluntary, incentives-based approach. "I think the marketplace always works better with incentives than with a two-by-four," he said before the meeting.

The council will vote March 28 on the proposals. The city will submit its Oceana plan to the Defense Department's inspector general by March 31.

The inspector general will rule by June on whether the city satisfied the BRAC panel's demands.

Reach Jon W. Glass at (757) 222-5119 or jon.glass@potomaconline.com.

Bob Dart, 2006. "Georgia a Leader in Counties with Fastest, Slowest Growth Demographic Swing." The Atlanta (GA) Journal-Constitution (March 16): A3.

Military Personnel Shifts Could Turn Prospects around for Shrinking Chattahoochee.

Georgia is home to some of the fastest-growing counties in the nation * and also the fastest-shrinking, according to U.S. Census estimates released today.

Chattahoochee County on the Alabama border and just south of Columbus, lost 6.2 percent of its population from July 1, 2004, to July 1, 2005, making it the most rapidly dwindling county in the country, according to the Census Bureau.

Liberty County in southeast Georgia ranked second, with a 4.9 percent population decline.

Washington County in Middle Georgia was fourth, with a 4.3 percent drop in population, and Terrell County, in the southwest farm belt, was 10th, with a 2 percent decline.

Three other Southern counties * in Florida, Alabama and Virginia * were also on the declining list, which excluded counties with fewer than 10,000 people. Even relatively minor shifts in the populations of such small counties can cause sizable percentage changes.

But the South also was heavily represented on the list of fastest-growing counties, with Flagler County, Fla., leading the way and the Washington, D.C., suburbs of northern Virginia close behind.

Georgia had 18 of the nation's 100 fastest-growing counties from April 1, 2000, to July 1, 2005, according to the census estimates. Most were part of suburban and exurban Atlanta: Paulding, Douglas, Carroll, Coweta, Spalding, Henry, Newton, Walton, Clayton, Barrow, Jackson, Forsyth, Cherokee, Dawson and Pickens.

The other Georgia counties on the 100 fastest-growing list were White, also increasingly home to Atlanta commuters; Effingham, a suburb of Savannah; and Lee, a suburb of Albany.

By contrast with many of Georgia's declining rural counties, the metro counties have booming economies. But it is not clear whether Chattahoochee County, where the population fell from 15,646 on July 1, 2004, to 14,579 on July 1, 2005, will retain its status as the leader among the nation's fastest-shrinking counties.

While most of the other shrinking counties in Georgia have farm economies that suffer

from high unemployment and poverty rates, Chattahoochee's demographics are dominated by Fort Benning, just across the Muscogee County line, said Gregory Harper, a demographer and statistician for the Census Bureau.

Deployments of military units and their families into and out of the sprawling infantry base cause significant swings in Chattahoochee's population, he explained.

"That's the main reason for the big decline," Harper said. "I wouldn't read too much into it."

With Fort Benning slated to receive thousands of new troops as the result of the recent base realignment and closure process, Chattahoochee's prospects should soon turn.

Harper said the same is true for Liberty County, which is subject to the demographic whims at Fort Stewart, its largest employer.

But the decline has been more consistent in farm counties such as Washington and Terrell. Previous population studies have shown rural counties losing their population to nearby urban areas.

That * as well as migration from other states * feeds metro Atlanta's growth.

"This has been the pattern for awhile" around Atlanta, Frey said.

A different pattern exists in Los Angeles, where there are more residents moving out than people moving in. But the metro Los Angeles population continues to grow because people are arriving from other countries.

"A lot of people coming into [metro] Atlanta aren't going to be familiar with grits and

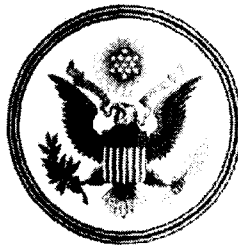
will be Yankees fans rather than Braves fans," Frey said.

But even with the area's international population growing, most arrivals are still coming from other parts of the United States rather than from foreign countries, he said.

Additional Notes

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Unattributed, 2006. "Gov't Tells Okinawa Gov. It Will Finalize U.S. Base

Realignment." Kyodo News (March 10, 04:03).

The government told Okinawa Gov. Keiichi Inamine on Friday that it will reach an agreement with the United States on realigning U.S. forces in Japan regardless of local opposition, Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe said.

"We will advance negotiations between Japan and the United States keeping in mind the local opinion," Abe said in a press conference.

"On the other hand, they are negotiations between Japan and the United States and if they conclude, that means an agreement," the top government spokesman added.

Abe said he conveyed the message in his meeting earlier in the day with Inamine, who was in Tokyo on what would be his final attempt to directly convey local opposition to the government before the two countries finalize their realignment plan around the end of this month.

The prefectural government is opposed to a plan concluded by Japan and the United States last October to relocate the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station in Ginowan to Nago, both in Okinawa Prefecture.

Foreign Minister Taro Aso also told Inamine that the government is willing to finalize the realignment, as Inamine reiterated his prefecture's opposition in both meetings with the Cabinet members.

Inamine visited Abe and Aso after meeting with Defense Agency Director General Fukushima Nukaga on Thursday.

Japan and the United States are set to finalize their plans to realign the U.S. military presence in Japan by the end of March, fleshing out more details of their accord in October on a set of measures including the removal of 7,000 U.S. Marines from Okinawa and the alternative Futemma relocation plan.

Abe earlier indicated in a press conference the government will prioritize the bilateral agreement over local consent.

Suzanne Yohannan. 2006. **"Pentagon Defends Market-Based BRAC Rule amid Cleanup Concerns."** Inside the Pentagon 22/10 (March 9).

The Defense Department is defending itself against charges that its new cleanup and property disposal process for the 2005 base realignment and closure round focuses too much on saving DOD money and not enough on community input or cleanup, claiming the rule reflects statutory changes enacted since 1995, according to a final BRAC rule released last week.

But at least one critic says the final rule fails to answer concerns critics raised about the draft version, underscoring the general belief that DOD has shifted its focus from economic development and cleanup at BRAC sites to a profit-driven approach.

Local governments, BRAC property redevelopers and communities largely criticized DOD's draft version of the BRAC revitalization rule last year, asserting it espoused policies aimed at maximizing DOD's financial return from BRAC property sales and failed to commit to aggressive cleanup at the sites. The rule updates regulations that applied to earlier BRAC rounds.

The rule calls for quick closure to speed community reuse of properties, full use of an array of legal authorities to transfer property, reliance on market forces in property conveyances and collaboration with communities on closure and redevelopment.

Many of the concerns expressed by commenters on the draft rule relate to changes made in response to base closure law amendments, DOD says in the final rule, published in the Federal Register Feb. 28. "Many of the most contentious provisions in the rule, judging from the comments, actually represent language taken almost verbatim from the base closure laws," a source says.

DOD assures in the preamble to the final rule that it "does not see the disposal process as a 'zero-sum' arrangement." It cites numerous goals Congress established for implementing the BRAC law, including intentions "to ensure a meaningful role for local communities in planning the reuse of the installations ... promote job generation at closing facilities, require appropriate and timely environmental remediation, and recoup the taxpayers' investment in installations."

But an official with the National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals (NALGEP), which heavily

criticized the draft rule, says that despite assurances in the preamble, there is no question that DOD is minimizing environmental cleanup obligations. NALGEP had urged DOD to include a commitment to clean up to levels that protect the environment and public health – a call DOD rejected, according to the source.

The final rule "reinforces the perception that BRAC is a profit-driven, real estate transaction rather than an opportunity to use these facilities to promote economic development," the source says.

But one BRAC consultant is applauding DOD's move toward gearing the process to more sophisticated buyers who are expected to practice "due diligence" when reviewing a property for a potential purchase.

DOD received 31 sets of comments from a variety of entities. Commenters such as the Association of Defense Communities, NALGEP and the Center for Public Environmental Oversight, urged DOD to revise its regulation.

The department in the final rule refutes the commenters' claims that the regulation was aimed at maximizing the military's monetary return, rather than supporting economic recovery through property transfers to local communities. "Promoting monetary return to the department for use either at the particular location or at other locations and rapid property transfer to encourage job generation are not mutually exclusive," the final rule states.

DOD claims the rule, unlike previous regulations, "does not give any particular preference to one form of disposal over another."

The issue also surfaced at a March 2 Senate hearing, where Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-HI) asked DOD environment chief Philip Grone about providing assurances that BRAC land disposal decisions will benefit local communities. Grone replied, "DOD will not dictate the disposal method of BRAC property," but such decisions will be handled on a case-specific basis by the services, keeping legal obligations in mind.

Even before the draft rule was proposed, DOD began pushing the sale of base closure property, which in turn helps pay for cleanups. The rule calls for greater consideration of obtaining fair-market value for closed property, in light of the statutory changes. The BRAC law amendments eliminated the stated preference for no-cost or low-cost economic development conveyances (EDCs), DOD says. Under these conveyances, DOD transfers properties to local redevelopment authorities as a way to create new jobs to address the economic impacts of closures and realignment.

The rule's conformance to these statutory changes "does not represent an effort by the department to seek greater monetary return," the rule states. "It simply represents the department's effort to conform its rule to the statute."

Many commenters also questioned the cleanup policy created under the rule. The rule should commit DOD to remediating to expected future land use – by adopting cleanup levels outlined in the local redevelopment plan – and should articulate fundamental environmental policies such as committing to perform all necessary cleanup to protect environment and public health, commenters said. They also stressed the need to integrate cleanup with property disposal and redevelopment plans, which

would speed property transfers and local economic recovery.

But DOD in the final rule says the cleanup standards it follows – in Superfund law and its regulatory counterpart, the National Contingency Plan – include consideration of expected future land use when determining cleanup standards.

Also, DOD claims it recognizes the importance of integrating cleanup with property disposal and land reuse planning. "Cleanup standards are tied to future land use," and are set pursuant to Superfund law. "Future land use is informed by the property disposal plan. As stated earlier, the local redevelopment plan is a basis for any proposed Federal action. Therefore, the redevelopment planning, property disposal, and environmental cleanup are integrated," the rule states.

DOD also defends its policy on transferring un-remediated property to other federal agencies, despite concerns expressed by several commenters. These commenters "objected to the requirement that other federal agencies accept any excess property in its existing condition, viewing this as a burden on their resources or an attempt by [the] department to avoid its cleanup responsibilities," the rule states

But DOD notes that other agencies must have the resources to "accept" the property they are seeking and must pay fair market value, which could include a reduced price in light of any contamination. Nonetheless, the requirement does not alter the government's liability for cleanup at such sites, according to the Pentagon.

DOD also defends the rule's delegation of authority from the department down to the services to interpret property disposal rules

and make final decisions on community issues. Commenters feared this would leave the Office of the Secretary of Defense out of the process and hamper uniform decision-making among these sites. But DOD says the responsibility shift is consistent with other delegations within the department. "The delegation language in the rule is actually somewhat less broad than the language it will be replacing," it notes.

In response to a concern over language on explosive safety hazards, DOD states it will change the rule accordingly. While the rule would allow the submission of an explosives safety plan prior to property transfer, it would not first require approval of the plan by the DOD Explosives Safety Board, one commenter had said. DOD concedes the rule's language should be clarified to reflect that the standard practice of the services is "to wait on actual approval of the plan before proceeding to transfer property," the rule reads.

DOD plans to soon publish an updated Base Redevelopment and Realignment Manual as a complementary document to the rule, according to the final regulation.

Randy Hascall. 2006. "Ellsworth Tries to Lure Financial Center." Argus Leader (Sioux Falls, SD) (March 8): 1.

Operation Would Mean Infusion of Service-Industry Jobs

Ellsworth Air Force Base supporters expect to learn in the coming weeks whether the base will be selected for a military financial services center, one of several proposals being pursued to help it grow and thrive.

More than half a year has passed since a national base-closing commission spared Ellsworth, ensuring its survival for another

decade. Not content, supporters spent the past months developing ideas and promoting the base for other missions.

With Ellsworth considered one of the front-runners for the financial services center, the Air Force conducted a second site visit in early February to gather more information in the selection process. The first survey was done in September 2005.

"We'll put our best foot forward," said Pat McElgunn, director of the Ellsworth Task Force. "We feel very capable of taking that mission."

Ellsworth is thought to be one of five or fewer finalists for the center, with an announcement expected in April. Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha is another contender.

The center would employ more than 700 military and civilian workers who would perform customer service duties on behalf of the military.

Bruce Rampelberg, chairman of the Ellsworth Task Force and a longtime banker, said South Dakota made some gains by going through the Base Realignment and Closure process.

"The BRAC process really brought a microscopic view of the area to the public's eye. That really helps in our quest for new missions," Rampelberg said. "I feel confident we're going to find some missions. The chemistry will be right, and it will fit well in our community, with the facilities and people we have available."

U.S. Sens. Tim Johnson and John Thune and U.S. Rep. Stephanie Herseth, who worked together in bipartisan fashion to save the base, sent a letter Tuesday to Secretary of

the Air Force Michael Wynne to stress the advantages of locating the center at Ellsworth.

Specifically, the letter emphasizes the availability of an abundant labor pool and the fact there are at least a dozen successful customer financial service or telemarketing companies in the Black Hills region.

The delegation has met with top Air Force officials in recent weeks and made a hard push to convince them Ellsworth is an ideal site for the center and other military missions.

"I feel very good about where we're at," Thune said. "Nothing is certain until they make the decision, but I feel we've made the strongest case possible. I think we're very well positioned. It's a great story if it happens."

The primary concerns of Air Force officials seemed to be that the available work force might be too small and there might be a lack of training opportunities. Ellsworth supporters think they've shown that's not true.

Sen. Johnson, a member of the Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee, said he assured Air Force Undersecretary Ronald Soga that South Dakota has a highly educated and skilled work force. The state already has a great deal of experience with customer service and credit card processing services, he said.

"Ellsworth would be an ideal location for the financial services center. We will continue to make the case," Johnson said. "Ellsworth has received over \$140 million in infrastructure improvements over the last 10 years, and there's no place better to locate this mission. You'd be hard pressed to find a

congressional delegation that has worked harder than ours in developing a world-class Air Force base."

Johnson said he will work with the Air Force to find out if any additional enhancements are needed at the base.

Herseth assured Wynne the region has more than enough available employees to meet needs and has two major universities that could provide training.

South Dakota Department of Labor statistics show the labor pool in the Rapid City metropolitan area is more than 12,000 people. McElgann said the state has been successful in the service center field, not only in Sioux Falls, but also in the Rapid City area.

Herseth said the Air Force Financial Services Center would be a big step toward ensuring Ellsworth has a long and bright future.

"It is clear that Ellsworth Air Force Base and the Black Hills region represent, together, a premier location for hosting the AFFSC," Herseth said. "Not only is Ellsworth particularly well-suited to host the mission, the region offers an unmatched labor pool and a proven tradition among financial service industry employers."

The center isn't the only potential improvement being targeted.

In recent weeks, Thune outlined a proposal to turn Ellsworth into one of the nation's elite training facilities by expanding the nearby Powder River training complex, upgrading communications and developing a bombing range for live ordnance.

"We believe there's a significant opportunity to expand and improve the base. There are some options we think could make Ellsworth really a premier base, an elite base in training," Thune said. "Bringing additional missions to Ellsworth is the best way to ensure its long-term operational status."

The training ground proposal, which would quadruple dedicated airspace at the Powder River Military Operating Area in eastern Wyoming to 4.5 million acres, would be a logical step for the Air Force to take, Ellsworth Task Force members said.

"The training range represents another great potential for years to come, whether it's flying manned or unmanned craft," Rosenberger said.

Thune also is talking with the South Dakota National Guard and Air Force about the possibility of moving the Guard's helicopters and aircraft from the Rapid City Regional Airport grounds to Ellsworth.

Reach Randy Hascall at 331-2320.

Unattributed, 2006. **"Bill to Create Implementation Redevelopment Authority for Brunswick Naval Air Station Approved in Committee."** US Fed News (March 7).

Augusta, Maine, March 7 – The Maine State House Speaker issued the following news release:

The Midwest Regional Redevelopment Authority came one step closer to reality on Tuesday afternoon after a 12-1 vote in the Business, Research and Economic Development Committee.

The legislation introduced by Speaker of the House John Richardson would create a quasi-governmental redevelopment authority modeled after the Loring Development Authority and allow for a regional approach to the redevelopment of Brunswick Naval Air Station. Currently Brunswick and Topsham have established Local Redevelopment Authorities to develop master reuse plans and zoning maps for the base property that lies within their municipalities. The LRA's aim to finish their work within the next 18 months. The base is slated for closure in 2011.

"The Navy has been an important part of our community and we're going to miss all they have contributed to the social fabric of this area," said Richardson. "But we have to start thinking today about how to best move forward. With the LRA's working on the zoning, the Regional Redevelopment Authority is a way for us to also begin looking at other important aspects."

Richardson pointed to the frequent inquiries being made by entrepreneurs, foundations and other organizations that are interested in developing base properties as the reason for getting the authority on the law books. He said the current planning authorities are not designed to implement a redevelopment plan.

"At every Brunswick LRA meeting we hear about a university, a developer or manufacturer who wants to know who they should talk to about their interest in the base. But our mission on the Brunswick LRA is not to place businesses, it's to create a new zoning map that certain businesses could potentially move into," said Richardson.

LD 1957, An Act to Create the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority would establish an 11-member board appointed by

the Governor to deal with the implementation of a master reuse plan for the base.

The committee added a technical amendment to the majority report that dealt with the possibility of vacancies on the board and was requested by the Secretary of State's office. They also amended the authority's bonding capacity to require the involvement of the Finance Authority of Maine. This amendment to the bonding authority is similar to that in the Loring Development Authority Statute.

The lone vote cast against the creation of the authority was cast by Rep. Lawrence Jacobsen of Waterboro. He did not offer an amendment or an explanation during the committee's work session for his vote.

On Thursday, March 9 at 4 p.m. the BRED committee will hold a work session on LD 1955, An Act to Provide Emergency Regional Economic Development Assistance for Brunswick Naval Air Station. LD 1955, also sponsored by Speaker Richardson, would allow properties in the Brunswick Labor Market to qualify for benefits similar to those available under the Pine Tree Development Zones.

Bryant Jordan, 2006. "**New Orleans Damage Expedites BRAC Moves.**" *Federal Times* (February 27): 15.

The ill wind that was Hurricane Katrina continues to blow in New Orleans.

Nearly six months after slamming the Gulf Coast, it is forcing the early removal of the 92nd Fighter Wing from Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Base New Orleans. The unit previously was scheduled for relocation to new bases in 2007 as part of

the latest series of base closure and realignment changes.

Officials said in a Feb. 1 statement the 926th would not be able to maintain wartime readiness because of Katrina-related damage to the base.

"In order to promote the readiness of our flying wings, resources from the 926th must shift to other bases," said Maj. Gen. Charles Stenner, director of plans and programs at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

The Reserve wing, whose 706th Fighter Squadron — the Cajuns — flies the A-10 Thunderbolt II, will realign to four bases: Barksdale Air Force Base, La.; Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.; Buckley Air Force Base, Colo.; and Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. The squadron's aircraft will be divided between the 917th Fighter Wing at Barksdale and the 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman, according to the Pentagon's Base Closure and Realignment Commission plan.

The first of the A-10s will move to Barksdale and Whiteman on March 15.

The wing's headquarters will move to Nellis and its Expeditionary Combat Support element will move to Buckley.

About 1,000 people will be affected, according to Maj. Rene Poche, a wing spokesman. The realignment will eliminate 637 traditional reservist jobs, 130 technician jobs and 118 civilian positions.

The realignment is slated to be complete by Sept. 30.

Stenner, in his statement, acknowledged it is "never the easy or desirable course of action to displace men and women who have

devoted their lives to defending our nation . . . and we'll do everything possible to assist every member of the unit — traditional reservists, technicians and civilians — in finding new jobs."

Some people have found new jobs with other Reserve units, Poche said, and others are looking through Web-based "clearing houses" that will attempt to match job hunters with new positions. The Web sites — for use by airmen and workers with the New Orleans base — may be accessed from military computers at www.mil.afrc.af.mil/hq/dp/brac, according to a spokesman for the reserve command at Robins.

Poche said the fact that many airmen have roots in the community makes it tough to move on.

"It is a pretty whole new beginning for some people, because we have some folks . . . who lost everything, and they're living with relatives or in a FEMA trailer," he said. "This [realignment] might, for some people, be an opportunity they're looking for."

Air Force Reserve Command has said that "any reservist who wants to continue serving will have the opportunity," Poche said.

Airmen whose jobs will be eliminated have options beyond finding a Reserve position elsewhere.

Those include becoming a Reserve individual mobilization augmentee, seeking reassignment with the Individual Ready Reserve, participating in the IRR in non-paid status, retiring if eligible, voluntarily separating from the Reserve or looking for opportunities with other service branches.

Jon W. Glas, 2016. **"Incentives Plan Proposed to Make Risk Zone BRAC Friendly."** The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA) (March 11).

In their bid to save the jets at Oceana Naval Air Station, city officials have crafted a plan to eliminate incompatible businesses in high-risk areas around the base.

Under the plan, property owners would get incentives to convert existing incompatible businesses or to open new commercial ventures that the Navy considers compatible in Accident Potential Zone 1.

Business operators in the Clear Zone, the highest-risk area for a jet crash, would be offered incentives to relocate.

City Manager Jim Spore said Friday the plan is an innovative attempt to address the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission's mandate to "roll back" incompatible development around Oceana or risk losing its fighter jets.

"It's the critical piece," Spore said.

The proposal will be presented Monday to a citizen's committee for review and then to the City Council on Tuesday.

If adopted by the council March 28, the proposal will be added to a package of development restrictions the council approved Dec. 20 as part of the city's effort to comply with the base-closure commission.

The council's vote will occur just three days before the city's March 31 deadline to present its plan to the Defense Department's inspector general, who will rule whether the city satisfied the BRAC requirements.

In August, the BRAC panel ordered the city to halt and roll back incompatible growth in APZ-1.

The City Council adopted a range of measures to halt further growth, but it rejected the demand to create a program to buy and condemn homes and most businesses in the zone. About 3,400 homes are in APZ-1.

Instead, the city is proposing to roll back commercial uses the Navy says don't mix with an air base. Generally, businesses that employ large numbers of people or draw a lot of customers are viewed by the Navy as incompatible.

City Attorney Les Lilley said Friday that the plan contains safeguards for existing home owners in APZ-1. It's not an attempt, Lilley said, to gradually convert existing residential neighborhoods into business or industrial areas.

"This program is not a threat to those neighborhoods," Lilley said.

Sections of such primary commercial corridors as Virginia Beach Boulevard and London Bridge Road lie within the APZ-1. The Navy considers dozens of businesses there, including retail shops and offices, as incompatible with Oceana's mission.

The goal of the plan, city officials said, is to offer incentives making it attractive for owners to convert them into compatible businesses, such as mini-warehouses or auto repair shops.

The incentives include a speedier approval process, rebates of certain business taxes and fees and tax breaks on renovating or replacing an incompatible business. Some of

the existing businesses are old and run-down, Lilley said.

“We’re trying to find uses compatible to this area to locate there so we don’t just end up with a brownfield,” Lilley said. “We’re trying to turn it into a win-win.”

Spore said he believes the plan complies with the intent of the BRAC order. Even if the city had agreed to condemn homes and businesses, he said, it would take at least 40 years to purchase the estimated \$700 million worth of property “based on the BRAC demand to spend at least \$15 million a year.

“You’d never get there,” Spore said. “We’re trying to get positive results for the property owners and for the Navy, and we’re going to show the inspector general our plan gets a lot more done than the BRAC plan.”

Reach Jon W. Glass at (757) 222-5119 or jon.glass@protonline.com

Jon W. Glass, 2006, “\$3.7 Million Is Earmarked to Buy Property under Flight Path.” *The Virginian-Pilot* (Norfolk, VA) (March 8): B3.

The City Council set aside \$3.7 million Tuesday to start buying land under a key Navy flight path, acting on a pledge to buffer Oceana Naval Air Station from further development.

The money will be used to prevent more homes from being built under a flight-training corridor between Oceana and Fentress Naval Auxiliary Landing Field in Chesapeake. The Navy views development restrictions as critical to Oceana’s future.

In December, the council imposed restrictions that eliminated 500 to 800 potential homes under the flight path. The property lies in medium and high jet-noise zones in the western half of the city’s transition area near North Landing and Indian River roads.

The owners of six parcels there already have offered to sell, said Jim Lawson, the city’s real estate agent. The city will buy only from willing sellers.

Lawson said the city could use the land for parking and open space or to mitigate the loss of wetlands when building roads or other city projects.

The money will be taken from the city’s Agricultural Reserve Program, which protects farm land from suburban development. It will be placed into a new account the council created for land purchases to buffer Oceana.

After the transfer, the Agricultural Reserve Program will have a balance of about \$12 million, said Jack Whitney, the city’s agriculture director. The transfer should have no effect on preserving farm fields, he said.

The council’s move is intended to satisfy a ruling by the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which ordered the city to halt and roll back development around Oceana or risk losing the base’s fighter jets.

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